A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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NEW TIMES

MAILED FIST OVER PERSIAN GULF

THE REFORM IN THE SOVIET UNION: REPERCUSSIONS

1917–1987

TIME AND PEOPLE

What does shock work mean for an actor? Shouldn't the theatre be made an "entertainment factory"? In the early 1930s these questions were not all that naive. The tempo of industrialization predominated, and the theatre was looking for a new language in which to communicate with new audiences.

Naturally, there were amusing developments. Drawing its inspiration from the labour records of the first five-year-plan periods, the Moscow Art Theatre formed "shock teams," and in the space of one season tried to put on as many shows as possible, with a grand total of 760 productions. The company performed without any days off and even challenged the Meyerhold Theatre company to compete in more productions on contemporary themes.

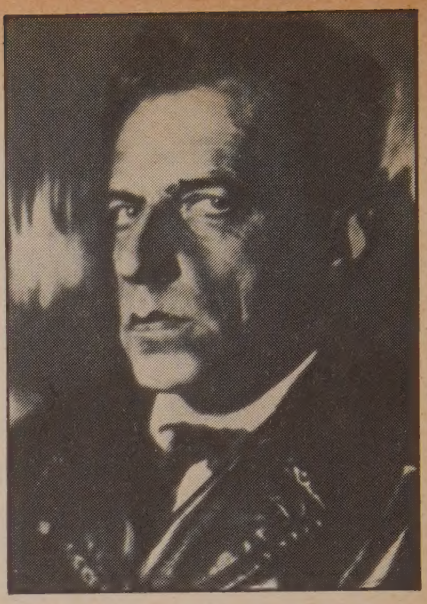
Konstantin Stanislavsky, Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, Alexander Tairov and Vsevolod Meyerhold were all concerned with the poetry and truth of the revolution, the meaning of the changes then taking place, and a creative interpretation of classical drama. The young playwright Nikolai Pogodin caused a stir with his "Man with a rifle," staged by the Vakhtangov Theatre for the 20th anniversary of the October Revolution. It is now part of the treasure trove of the Soviet drama.

In the original production, Boris Shchukin was cast as Lenin. By today's standards there is much that his portrayal lacks. The emphasis was more on the external resemblance than on the inner man. However, audiences greatly appreciated this fine actor's extremely convincing portrayal of "the most humane man." Each time Shchukin appeared on the stage as Lenin, the entire hall rose to give him a standing ovation, for in real life they were dealing less and less often with approachable people in authority.

The plays of Korneichuk, Trenev, Afinogenov and Virta were also immensely popular. However, many talented playwrights and creative directors fell foul of a malign bureaucracy. Mikhail Bulgakov's work was banned, while the brilliant Meyerhold died in tragic circumstances.

Though the theatre has now entered a difficult period, it continues to develop, with plays from the classical repertoire getting a new lease of life. The Vakhtangov company's "Yegor Bulychev and others" inaugurated a whole series of Maxim Gorky productions at leading Soviet theatres.

The artistic level of productions has been increasing, as has the number of theatres. In 1914 tsarist Russia had only 153 theatres, and in 1938 there were 702, including many in what were formerly outlying areas—Tajikistan, Kirghizia and Turkmenia—whose people had not previously had even the slightest notion of the theatre.



Vsevolod Meyerhold.

Konstantin Stanislavsky and Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, the two grand old men of the Russian theatre.

Alexander Tairov

Scene from "Man with a Rifle," with Boris Shchukin as Lenin.

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29

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CONTENTS

2
Editorial
DICTATORS GONE, BUT...

3
U.S.S.R.: Reconstruction and Democracy
Yuri Shevchenko. THE ECHO OF THE REFORM

5
1917—1987. The October Revolution and Destinies of the World
"FOLLOWING THE TRAIL BLAZED BY THE REVOLUTION"
Nguyen Van Linh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, interviewed by New Times

6
Observer's View
Lev Bezymensky. WHAT TO FILL THE PAGES WITH!

7
Panorama

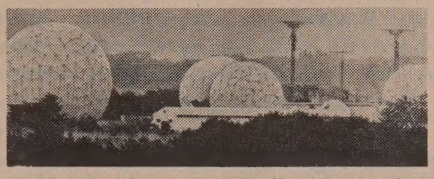
9
U.S.S.R.-U.S.A.
Thomas Watson: I LIKE A CHALLENGE

10
Reflections
Soltan Dzarasov. THE TRUTH, ACTION, PROGRESS

12
Alexander Pumpyansky. MEETINGS ON THE BRIDGE

15
In retrospect
Boris Borodin. OUR COMMON VICTORY

Thomas Watson welcomed in Moscow



An electronic intelligence station at Misawa, Japan

Boris Pasternak on his novel "Doctor Zhivago"

16
Taking up a Point
Marina Shakina. BANKRUPTCY, UNPROFITABILITY, EMPLOYMENT...

17
Readers' Forum. Comment

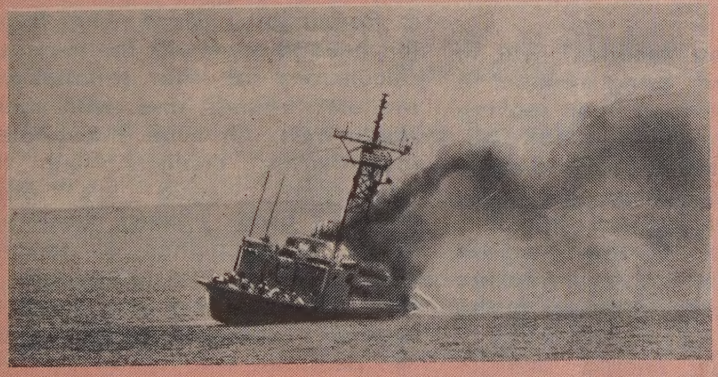
22
Victor Mishin. YOUNG TRADE UNIONISTS MEET
Nikita Zholkver. SOCIALIST ENTERPRISE

24
Asian-Pacific region
WHY THE MISSILES REMAIN

26
Human rights
Alexander Obukhov. THE N-2 BLOCK MYSTERY

28
Literature
Evgeny Pasternak. THE FREE ASCENT OF IMAGINATION

30
Moscow film festival
Neya Zorkaya. SEEDS OF EVIL AND ROOTS OF GOOD



18

MAILED FIST OVER THE PERSIAN GULF
The United States is concentrating its naval ships and combat aircraft in the Persian Gulf region under the demagogic pretext of "defending freedom of navigation" there.

NEW TIMES

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FROM OUR MAILBAG

●

I'm a pensioner. In my free time I participate in the activities of the local club, whose members come out for peace and against unemployment. For that I and my friends have been labelled "pro-Soviet," but that does not bother us.

The Soviet circus recently gave performances in Bologna. Members of our club attended a performance and made the acquaintance of the Soviet artists. It seemed to me that when the time came to say goodbye, we were already fast friends.

Renato MUZZARELLI,
Bologna, Italy

●

In 1931 the workers' sports club Fichte and a Soviet sports delegation exchanged banners. When the nazis came to power Frau Boelcke hid the banner in her house. Later she gave refuge to seven anti-fascists threatened with death. In 1945 Gertruda Boelcke handed over the banner to Soviet soldiers. Since then there has been no trace of it.

We, members of the Young Journalists group at the House of Pioneers in the Pankow district of Berlin have been trying to trace the banner for two years, or at least find out what happened to it. Maybe readers of New Times could help us!

Claudia LIEBRAM,
Berlin, G.D.R.

ATTENTION SUBSCRIBERS!

With this issue we are sending you a supplement entitled "SDI: Dangers, Illusions, Alternative."

The editors

EDITORIAL

DICTATORS GONE, BUT...

History has brought us a surprise. Though an arch-conservative occupies the White House, a dozen dictatorships allied with the United States have been brought down with Washington's help. Now it is the turn of Chun Doo Hwan. And it looks as if he is not the last of the dictator-friends the White House has decided to get rid of.

For Stroessner - a U.S. protégé since 1954 - all the Americans can probably do now is find a plane to take the Paraguayan tyrant back to his native Bavaria or any other place where he will be accepted. Nor does the Taiwan despot Jiang Jinggho feel the backing he used to get. In Chile, the U.S. embassy is openly intriguing against Pinochet.

Washington is said to have prepared scenarios for democratizing 20-25 "friendly countries" in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The "happy end" they provide for is replacing the "ageing patriarchs" tired out with fighting their own people by strong and popular regimes. The "patriarchs," who only a few years ago were regarded as the sole barrier to "communist penetration," have turned out to be no good. Now the State Department takes the view that every extra hour they spend at the helm of state only tends to increase the forces of the left opposition.

And so "free America" will in deeds not words bring freedom to those who have long been seeking it.... What is perplexing, however, is the trouble being taken to settle ex-dictators elsewhere. At times one gets the impression that it is not the people who are being rid of them but the dictators who are being saved from the anger of the people.

Only recently another anti-government putsch was foiled in the Philippines. The main figure in it was again Marcos. Although watched over vigilantly by the U.S. authorities, he has made similar attempts several times. Could it be because a tame conspirator is a good way of reminding regimes that have not quite found their feet what they should and what they should not do?

They should pay the tyrant's debts without a murmur, they should not be too soft with the left, who opposed the tyrant. They should strengthen the defence of the West and not demand the withdrawal of American bases from their territory. According to Washington's scenario, the young democracies will still play the humiliating part of a dependent outlying capitalist region, of a card to be played in the global game for increasing the United States' might.

That's why there is such a great demand now for leaders who, using modern and liberal methods, could curb and tame the masses who have risen to a struggle against dictatorships. The latest example is the desperate turnabout of Ro Tae Woo, who is trying to prevent South Korea from going the way of South Vietnam. But in places like Chile, where reliable men have not yet been prepared to take over power, the agony of the tyranny is protracted. An agony costing thousands of lives....

Democratization in the developing countries is allowed to go only as far as Washington decides is permissible. Those who forget this have to cope with the merciless calculations of the International Monetary Fund, and with quiet trade wars. Or with the endless low-intensity conflicts like the aggression waged by other people's hands against Nicaragua. While the activities of terrorist groups arouse just indignation in the West, great-power terrorism against weaker nations is considered possible.

Washington may be withdrawing support from dictatorships, but it has no intention of renouncing its policy of dictation.

THE ECHO OF THE REFORM

YURI SHEVCHENKO

The knowledge of certain principles, Helvetius says, easily makes up for the ignorance of certain facts.

It looks as if in commenting on and discussing the economic reform in the U.S.S.R., certain Western media have turned the celebrated French philosopher's maxim topsy turvy: for them, the knowledge of certain facts more than compensates for the ignorance (or rather misunderstanding) of certain principles.

I mean the facts that have been made public in the U.S.S.R. and, of course, outside it. The June plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee levelled sharp criticism at many past economic practices, such as bartering away our mineral wealth for foreign grain and arbitrary production planning. On the basis of these facts, Western commentators rush to the conclusion that the reform is paradoxical and even utopian. In their speculations they somehow fail to consider the essential point: why the country's leadership is disclosing the negative aspects of the Soviet economy for all to see, what principles it is guided by in doing so, and what it is trying to achieve.

The more serious and sober analysts are reserving judgement, however. They have maintained for years, often not without reason, that the trouble with the Soviet economy lay not so much in people queueing for goods in short supply as in these queues being hushed up. Openness, which is part of the reform, has thrown many of our critics off their stride. Be that as it may, to quote The Times, "Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader, may still be striving to transform the Soviet media, but he has already succeeded with the American version. You can hardly turn on a television in the United States without finding a documentary on the new Russia or one of the Kremlin's urbane spokesmen delivering a disarming account of the failings of his country. Magazines are devoting much space to glimpses of daily life from Riga to Khabarovsk.... America is in the throes of one of its periodic bouts of fascination with the other superpower."

Although perestroika has now been in progress for over two years, the Americans are still undecided as to what to make of it, whether or not to take it into account, whether to treat the U.S.S.R. as before or to bring their policy towards us into line with the new realities. The appropriate decisions are made in the corridors of power, of course, but against the backdrop of the discordant chorus of media comments on what's going on in the U.S.S.R. According to The Times, this chorus has drowned everything else.

Most comments emphasize the serious obstacles in the way of the radical reforms initiated by the Soviet Union. The Christian Science Monitor warns that enormous barriers lie ahead, that the reform is most unwelcome to many Soviet citizens, that it threatens bureaucrats accustomed to keeping production under their control, the workers who may lose their jobs, and consumers who may refuse to buy goods at prices more corresponding to production outlays.

Indeed, there are obstacles galore, and these obstacles are much more serious than The Christian Science Monitor thinks. To begin with, there is the inertia of the enormous economic mechanism that has been running in other gears for years and, indeed, decades - although, incidentally, the Soviet worker is not threatened with unemployment as the Soviet economy simply does not provide for labour redundancy as a production rate adjustment factor. Other serious obstacles include social apathy, which will have to be overcome, and widespread passiveness. The bureaucrats the paper mentions are also bound to cause us a lot of trouble. All this is true.

The reform and the worker

The changes now in progress in the U.S.S.R. should not on any account be interpreted as a threat to socialism, as certain newspaper and magazine publications are doing; so far, they imply, the new line is being covered up by Marxist phraseology, but sooner or later it will lead to the collapse of socialism, and the triumph of Western values; freedom and openness will erode the Soviets like rust.

Such reasoning is nothing but wishful thinking. The combination of planning and market orientation, the democratization of economic management, the setting up of joint ventures, the encouragement of individual enterprise - all this will never divorce the U.S.S.R. from socialism; on the contrary, these developments promise the modernization and intensification of socialism, progress for the country, and the improvement of its economic and social health.

Writing in Newsweek, Marshall Goldman, deputy director of the Russian Research Centre, Harvard University, alleged that the most serious trouble with the reforms is they mean nothing to the workers.

According to The Chicago Tribune, experienced Kremlin-watchers noted the depressing picture painted by Nikolai Ryzhkov (meaning the report made by the Soviet Prime Minister at a session of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet - **Y.S.**). The report, the paper went on, was taken as a warning that the reformers should tread carefully lest they cause major social upheavals.

The New York Post is of the opinion that the biggest risk being run by the Soviet leadership in the game it has started is that of antagonizing millions of parasites living off the Soviet system - people who produce next to nothing but who nonetheless receive "according to their needs."

Relations between the worker and the reform are indeed a key issue.

Let us take a closer look at it.

For all the offensive sound of the word "parasite," why not try and find a grain of truth in this criticism from our ideological opponent? Whom does the paper mean - ordinary idlers? Or does it imply something much more serious - namely, that we, many of us at any rate, have simply forgotten how to work properly and are in a sense living at socialism's expense? It is of course the purpose of the reform to put an end to this practice on a national scale.

The reform means nothing to the working man, they say. That is simply untrue. The newly-adopted Law of the U.S.S.R. on the State Enterprise (Amalgamation) grants the workers new and perfectly tangible rights both in running production and in distributing profits. Economic management is undergoing democratization at all levels; the practice of electing plant and factory managers is

gaining ground; many work collectives (production teams included) are being switched over to cost accounting.

There is no denying the fact that these are political moves that do not automatically bring higher earnings overnight. But their very purpose is to restore the prestige of human endeavour, the value of the ruble truly **earned**, re-establish rational principles in the economy, make work more conscientious, healthier, and more adequately paid. This is exactly how it should be under socialism, and this is what the working people want.

The reform that now is gaining in scale and momentum on the Party's initiative would hardly have got off the ground at all had the working class not taken it up.

Perestroika is indeed an upheaval, but the dramatic changes it brings are for the better; they favour progress, and benefit the socialist system and the workingman, who is eager to do his best and be paid accordingly. These are truly revolutionary changes in the management and organization of the economy, aimed at removing all the handicaps and obstacles in the workingman's way.

The way they see it

The London Independent recently carried an article by Peter Kellner who remarked, in part: "If ever a Europe-wide perspective were needed, it is now, in response to the rapid changes that Mr Gorbachev has been making ...in Moscow. Different Western governments may respond variously, with enthusiasm or scepticism, or disbelief; but what do their publics think?"

This question is legitimate, and to the point.

Two thirds of Western Europe's population, 83 per cent of the British included, believe that the Soviet reforms will ensure a real improvement in the quality of life in the Soviet Union. Three West Europeans out of four think that the Soviet Union is doing more than the United States to slow down the arms race.

These figures quoted by Peter Kellner in the above-mentioned article, are based on the results of public opinion polls involving over 6,000 people in nine countries, including Britain, France, the F.R.G., Italy, and Greece.

Is it only geographical proximity to our country's borders that explains such a sober view of our reform? Hardly so! Most West Europeans see things in their right perspective, and are increasingly aware of universal interdependence, of the fact that the earth is our common home.

This awareness is not to be found everywhere. Although Japan is right "next door" to the Soviet Far East, the "sharp turn that has taken place in the U.S.S.R. over these last two years came as a complete surprise," says T. Murakami, deputy director of the research department of the Japan Association for Trade with the Soviet Union and the Socialist Countries of Europe. "The fact that the Soviet leadership is, contrary to forecasts, pushing radical reforms in the Soviet economy, as evidenced by the latest plenary meeting, has turned out to be a harsh reality to us. This compels us to revise our approach to the processes at work in the U.S.S.R...."

Who stands to gain

Is the reform good or bad for the West? Is it threatening or beneficial?

A wide spectrum of opinions, a wide spectrum of forecasts.... Here is one of them, from a Christian Science Monitor editorial, which says that the Soviet Union's preoccupation with its internal reforms may give the West a measure of respite: there will be fewer East-West crises, and less interest in spending rubles on armaments. However, if Gorbachev's reforms prove a success, the paper says, it will be much more difficult to deal with the Soviets in the international arena. Such reforms are traditionally followed by the advent of hard-liners trying to impose their political will on others.

This statement is not entirely devoid of realism. It is indeed better to spend **rubles** on wheat and beef production than on arms manufacture. But the article makes no mention of **dollars.** The author sticks to the threadbare concept of the U.S.S.R. as the source of a mythical threat.

"A quiet and unbiassed analysis will make it clear," the F.R.G. Social Democrats' theoretical and political journal Neue Gesellschaft - Frankfurter Hefte writes in an editorial, "that the Russians are not coming and the Cossacks will not water their horses in the Rhine (without mentioning the fact that considering the quality of the water in that river they would have been able to do so only once). And then, why should they want to conquer Western Europe or even the world? They have more than enough space at home. Why should they want extra problems on their hands?

"Now, whether the West, the NATO countries in particular, should rejoice at the Soviet reforms is a different matter. Incidentally, a self-confident neighbour living in a densely populated house is a more reliable and pleasant partner than a neighbour suffering from an inferiority complex."

In a recent Soviet TV programme, Professor John K. Galbraith, the well-known American economist, made a tongue-in-cheek remark to the effect that the Western economy needs restructuring as badly as the Soviet one does. This statement has a double meaning.

Geoffrey Howe, Britain's Foreign Secretary, who accompanied Margaret Thatcher on her recent tour of our country, came to the conclusion that the Soviet leadership actually wanted to make East-West relations more stable. Immediately after the trip ended, he suggested three principles on which to deal with the U.S.S.R. - realism, vigilance and lack of bias. For all the differences of personal opinions, the desire for realism and freedom from bias is characteristic today of many in Europe and the world - political scientists and statesmen, businessmen and rank-and-file workers alike. This desire is the principal common denominator. Speaking on Soviet television, President Richard von Weizsäcker of the F.R.G. was even more definite about it. Your strengthening strengthens us, he said, and vice versa.

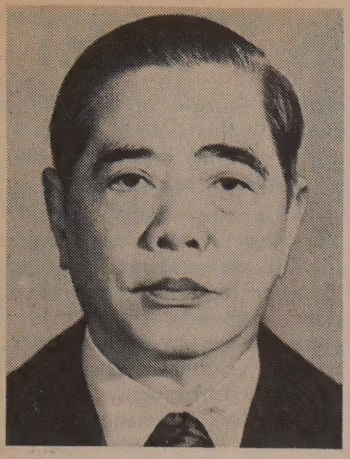
We live on the same continent. As it discards shopworn stereotypes, the Western public is steadily coming to realize the need for a stable and highly-developed neighbour, a worthy partner in economic cooperation and economic competition.

Lee Hamilton, a leading member of the U.S. House of Representatives, voiced this change of attitude as follows in a special press release recently: what's bad for the Soviet Union is not necessarily good for the United States. On balance, Lee Hamilton thinks, the U.S. would benefit more from the reform's success than from its failure. This is a good point of departure.

• • •

I have confined myself to giving the reader a general idea of the debates surrounding the economic reform in the U.S.S.R. as mirrored by the foreign press.

The proof of the Soviet economic reform and of perestroika in its entirety will be in the achievements of the Soviet people in pursuance of their plans. ■



"Following the trail blazed by the revolution..."

Nguyen Van Linh, General Secretary of the Communist party of Vietnam, interviewed by New Times

The 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution is approaching. Comrade Nguyen Van Linh, how would you define its international significance from the standpoint of today?

This year the peoples of socialist countries and all mankind will celebrate, together with the Soviet people, the seventieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. "The victory of the October Revolution," President Ho Chi Minh said, "has illumined the history of the peoples with unfading light, and ushered in a new era - the era of the triumph of socialism and of the collapse of capitalism."

Over the seventy years since the victory of the October Revolution, the Soviet Union has developed into a mighty socialist state and a bulwark of world peace. It gives its support to all peoples fighting imperialism and reaction. Following the resolutions of the 27th CPSU Congress, the Soviet people has embarked on a course of reconstruction and renewal which is of profound revolutionary importance. The home of the October Revolution continues to be in van of the advance towards socialism and communism.

Over the seventy years since the October Revolution much on our planet has changed beyond recognition. Socialism has become a world system. The sphere of imperialism's domination and influence is shrinking rapidly. The working classes and all working people in the capitalist countries are steadily closing their ranks and daily stepping up the struggle for their rights.

The October Revolution, the greatest event of this century, opened up a new era in the history of mankind - the era of socialism.

Ho Chi Minh, the leader of the Vietnamese people, wrote and said much about the influence of the ideas of the October Revolution on the revolutionary process in Vietnam. How are these ideas being put into practice there? What main problems of socialist development is your country tackling today?

Following the trail blazed by the October Revolution and making creative use of Marxism-Leninism in conditions prevailing in Vietnam, the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), founded and brought to maturity by President Ho Chi Minh, led our people through many difficulties to carry the cause of national liberation and the reunification of the country to completion, and advanced the Vietnamese revolution to a new stage - that of building socialism on a national scale, and staunchly defending our socialist motherland.

Today the Vietnamese people is implementing the decisions of the Sixth Congress of the CPV and promoting the process of renewal in all spheres with a view of a gradual stabilization of the socio-economic situation and living standards and stimulating the further advance of the Vietnamese revolution.

The victories of the Vietnamese revolution are linked inseparably with the ideas of the October Revolution, the immortal teachings of Lenin, and the enormous and effective support rendered us by the CPSU, the government and the people of the Soviet Union, other fraternal socialist countries, and by our friends on all five continents.

The Sixth Congress of the CPV discussed the difficulties encountered by your country with absolute frankness. What steps are being taken to cope with them?

In fulfilling the resolutions of the Party's Sixth Congress, the Vietnamese people is concentrating on the implementation of three major economic programmes for the current five-year period (1986-90) aimed at increasing the production of food, consumer goods and export items, respectively. These are to be the main concerns of our economy. We propose to deal with the most pressing problems in the spheres of circulation and distribution, to update the entire economic management system, to purge the Party cadre and the state machinery, make the social climate in our country healthier, and further promote and consolidate the working people's right to be the collective master in all spheres.

Socialist Vietnam is today an efficient member of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. What forms of cooperation with the European CMEA member states are, in your view, most conducive to the rapid growth of Vietnam's economic potential?

We think our cooperation with the European CMEA member states can be made more rewarding by promoting it at three levels: government, ministerial and factory. We have to expand the direct links between industries and production plants, and set up joint enterprises with the responsibilities and interests of the parties concerned closely dovetailed.

Your country is situated in a troubled area where passions are running high over a number of unresolved issues. What has Vietnam to offer by way of solving these problems?

Seeking to ensure peace and security in Asia and the Pacific, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has put forward, jointly with Laos and Kampuchea, several important peace initiatives aimed at a reasonable political settlement of the conflicts there, improving the political climate in Southeast Asia, and region.

Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea are determined to seek a political settlement of the Kampuchean problem based on the actual state of affairs.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam would like to normalize and improve its relations with the People's Republic of China which are, we believe, an important factor for peace in Asia and the rest of the world.

WHAT TO FILL THE PAGES WITH?

This time - and lately that has not often happened - the views in Bonn and Moscow coincided. The visit of Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker to the Soviet Union was seen as an important and promising event in the history of the relations between the two countries and in the life of Europe today. What prompted such unanimity? Apparently, it is rooted in the objective necessity to restore the positive process which took its beginning in the 1970s with the signing of the Moscow Treaty and could have made Soviet-West German relations a stabilizing factor on an all-European scale.

. . .

"The change of the guard" in Bonn at the beginning of the 1980s affected this process. The leading force in the new coalition was having great difficulty in getting rid of its one-time refusal to accept the ideas of the Moscow Treaty. There was an unhealthy trend to formally accept the letter and spirit of the agreements of the 1970s while doing the exact opposite - reviving the obsolete stereotypes of the Adenauer days. But as a leading figure in the CDU reminded his colleagues, not without irony, "a good conservative party is worthy of its name only when it itself makes the necessary changes." These words belong to Richard von Weizsäcker - at that time a CDU member of the Bundestag, described by a West German paper as "a conservative in the best sense of the word."

A year ago it seemed that changes began to take place. In July 1986 both sides declared their mutual desire to turn over a new page in their relations, the state of which left much to be desired. However, during the frank exchange of views held recently in Moscow it was stated that the new page remained blank and had almost been removed during the past time.

In those circumstances the President's visit acquired special political significance, as Bonn indicated repeatedly. The days spent by Richard von Weizsäcker in Moscow, Leningrad and Novosibirsk showed that there exist great unused possibilities for cooperation in diverse fields, which would benefit Europe as a whole. This was evident not only from the talks held by the politicians. It was evident also from the unusual meeting the President had with Soviet youth that was shown both on Soviet and West German TV.

Of course, such visits are designed to solve long-term problems rather than burning issues. "It is extremely important that today's decisions should have a long-term perspective," Richard von Weizsäcker said in Moscow. "How do we envisage relations between East and West in the year 2000? As we make transition to the next century, how do we foresee Europe developing in its entirety?"

These questions deserve the most serious attention. It is heartening that they are also being asked in the F.R.G. The Soviet Union's European concept - a nuclear-free Europe and a nuclear-free world by the year 2000 - was born in the search for new ways and deliberations on this basic issue. It is in the light of this concept that we view all political events, including those pages that are now being written in relations between the U.S.S.R. and the Federal Republic. That is why I should like to say a few words about what, in my opinion, **should not** under any circumstances be written on those pages.

First, nothing should be written that could hinder the advancement of Europe and the whole world to greater security, to eliminating the nuclear confrontation. Now is a special time for that. There exists the chance of making a real step forward - ridding Europe of medium-range and short-range missiles. And in this unique situation the West German government is putting forward a demand that threatens to block an imminent agreement.

What I have in mind is the demand that the Bundeswehr keep the Pershing-1A missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. This demand is absurd, to say the least, because West German leaders themselves insist that the "keys" to nuclear warheads are not in their hands, but in the Americans'. So where does Bonn come in? Does it lay claim to the co-ownership of nuclear weapons, which is categorically forbidden by the non-proliferation treaty? Bonn leaders themselves tend to strengthen such suspicions. Take for instance the recent and truly sensational statement of Defence Minister Wörner: "We also need tactical nuclear weapons that could reach the territory of the Soviet Union." No more and no less!

Of course, such lines should never be written on the pages of our relations. What we have to work for today is not reaching each other's territory, but rooting out such a way of thinking. The West German side should refrain from inscribing on the new pages provocative phrases about West Berlin that could only create distrust of the F.R.G.

Moving from bilateral relations to matters affecting the whole of Europe, who in Europe benefits from the burst of energy displayed by the West German military circles today to develop military cooperation with France? Including the idea of replacing the nuclear arms race with a conventional arms race in the F.R.G. That, again, is being undertaken at a very special moment - when there is a chance of stopping such a race from the Atlantic to the Urals....

. . .

I can hear the objections: why concentrate on military matters, on missiles? There are other matters, more promising and pleasing fields of activity: economic, cultural, technical, sports and human contacts. That view was voiced by the President, too, when he said that "East-West relations must not continue to be dominated by security issues." And further, "disarmament alone will not bring peace."

One doesn't argue with Presidents? But one can take issue with their views. Disarmament alone will not, indeed, bring peace. But without it - especially in view of the nuclear-missile threat - there is no chance of achieving peace. The militarization of thinking is not characteristic of Soviet foreign policy. The past years have shown the significance socialist diplomacy attaches to the entire complex of relations with the West, as spelled out in the Helsinki Final Act. But the priorities remain.

It would be regrettable if we were to ignore the ominous movement of the military machine, which because of its own dynamics is picking up speed. On the other hand, agreements limiting the arms race would create favourable conditions for expanding cooperation in all "three baskets." The visit of the Federal President confirmed that the opportunities are very great in this respect.

The new pages in Soviet-West German relations could and should be filled with a clear understanding of the political priorities of the end of the 20th century. And it would be useful to refrain from writing anything that contradicts this understanding.

LEV BEZYMENSKY

U.S.S.R.-AUSTRIA

Steadily growing relations

●THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF SOVIET PREMIER NIKOLAI RYZHKOV TO AUSTRIA HAS ENDED.

The four days of his packed programme passed quickly. But they left a profound impression on relations between our two countries. A number of Soviet-Austrian documents were signed in the economic field, as well as on tourism, cultural cooperation and transport. Several major commercial contracts were signed between Austrian firms and Soviet foreign trade organizations, and the announcement that the Soviet Union was prepared to train an Austrian cosmonaut for a space flight caused a considerable stir.

I asked Austria's Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky for his views on the outcome of the visit.

"Throughout the postwar years," the Chancellor said, "relations between our countries have been advancing and growing stronger in all fields. It can be said immediately that no unresolved problems or controversial issues hamper our relations. The visit that has just ended strikingly demonstrated that.

"However, that was not its only significance. In the course both of the official talks and numerous informal conversations and meetings, we succeeded in bringing relations between Austria and the Soviet Union to a qualitatively new level, and substantially expanding the framework of cooperation. Both sides believe that it is now necessary to approach the entire complex of our relations in a new way and impart enhanced quality to their content.

"The process of restructuring in the Soviet Union," continued the Chancellor, "which we in Austria, as everywhere in the West, associate with M.S. Gorbachev's efforts, opens up favourable opportunities for this. We are following the changes in Soviet society with interest and sympathy.

"We are pleased that the volume of trade between our countries has tripled over the past ten years. But today," the Chancellor went on, "we can no longer be satisfied with our achievements to date or keep to our traditional forms of cooperation. The time for trading like peddlers in separate commodities has passed. We need new approaches...."

The talks revealed that both sides have considerable reserves to exploit in intensifying trade and economic ties: compensation deals, cooperation on the markets of third countries, as well as at home, and joint ventures. In the present circumstances the exchange of experience in the management and organization of production assumes great importance. The Chancellor suggested that the Soviet side

"An entomologist! But I called for one of those CIA guys who install electronic bugs."
Cartoon by Vsevolod Arsenyev

send between 30 and 50 representatives of Soviet business circles to Austria, where for a period of, say, six months they would be able to watch their Austrian colleagues at work and study their experience.

The visit, Franz Vranitzky concluded, not only made it possible to conclude a number of important agreements and exchange views on a wide range of international problems, but also enabled us to establish good personal contacts, and gain a better understanding of each other. That is extremely important.

ANATOLY KOVRIGIN
New Times
special correspondent

Vienna

INDIA

Extremists step up terror

●"WE SIKHS KNOW HOW TO SACRIFICE OUR LIVES. AT THE SAME TIME, WE KNOW HOW TO CUT OTHERS INTO PIECES."

Thus spoke Bhindranwale, the Godfather of Punjab extremist separatists, who seek the secession of the state of Punjab from the rest of India and the establishment of an independent Sikh state - Khalistan.

Among Bhindranwale's followers today none seem ready to sacrifice their lives. On the other hand, however, they are ruthless in spilling the innocent blood of others.

On the evening of July 6, a group of terrorists stopped a bus travelling from Chandigarh (the capital of Punjab) to Rikhikesh, a Hindu holy place in the foothills of the Himalayas. They shot the passengers, among them women and children. A similar incident took place the next day in the neighbouring state of Hariana, where two more buses were attacked. In all, more than 70 people died - all Hindus.

The extremists are out to intimidate the population of Punjab and force the Hindu minority still living in the state to leave it. On the other hand, strange as it may sound, by their crimes the terrorists are deliberately provoking assaults on Sikhs living in other parts of the country, as has been the case in a number of areas in the past few days. This fuels the anti-government feeling among Hindus and Sikhs living in many towns outside Punjab. It is to the latter that the separatists addressed their appeal "to return to their land and join in the struggle for its liberation." Nor can the possibility be discounted that such sentiments could spread to Sikhs in the Army.

Another aspect of the problem - the international one - is disturbing Indians. Many Sikhs are resident in other countries - Pakistan, the United States, Britain and Canada. One of the leaders of the Sikh terrorist underground, Manbir Singh, claimed recently that thousands of militant Sikhs in the United States, Britain and Canada had enrolled as reservists in his army. Dozens of camps training Sikh terrorists operate in Pakistan, and there are similar schools in the U.S. and Canada. Although the ruling circles in those countries prefer officially to deny any involvement in their subversive activities, it is plain that both Washington and Islamabad are making direct use of the "Sikh factor" to put pressure on the Indian government and destabilize the situation in the country.

The growing impact of the unrest in Punjab on the domestic political situation in India is making a settlement of the Punjab problem a priority with the Indian government. Rajiv Gandhi's government has resorted to various measures in the attempt to find a solution. Stepping up the fight against the terrorist underground, he has used the police and in some cases army units. He has used political methods too, seeking cooperation with moderate members of the Sikh community on the basis of the agreement signed two years ago with the Punjabi party Akali Dal. Within the framework of that agreement, the Central government made certain concessions. But it did not succeed in isolating subversive extremist elements and improving the situation as a whole. Last May the government introduced Presidential rule in the state. But that too, as the bloodshed on July 6-7 showed, has so far not helped break the back of separatism.

The authorities have sent additional paramilitary police forces to the areas involved. It has also been decided to set up special military units to combat terrorism, to be stationed in Punjab and other northern states. At the same time, as Rajiv Gandhi underlined at his meeting with leaders of the opposition parties, the government intends to make full use of all civilian measures before resorting to the help of the army.

SERGEI IRODOV

U.S.S.R.-JAPAN

Ship on a peace mission

●JAPANESE "PEACE VESSEL" ARRIVES IN NAKHODKA.

The passengers - members of trade unions, women's and youth organizations - embarked the voyage in order to help our peoples gain greater mutual understanding.

The group was led by Akira Iwai, a prominent figure in the working class movement and a holder of the International Lenin Prize "For the Promotion of Peace Among Nations."

It should be said that the two hundred passengers on board the ship had set themselves no easy task. The record of Soviet-Japanese relations cannot be described as happy: two wars, the Siberian intervention, Hasan, Khalkhin-Gol... Even in the postwar period, when the world was coming to itself after the long nightmare and trying hard to forget, Soviet-Japanese ties did not thrive: no diplomatic relations for 11 years (till as late as 1956), and even then, instead of a peace treaty, just a declaration; and then the Japano-American security treaty which further aggravated relations.

Such a state of affairs was not an inevitable consequence of the realities of the second half of the 20th century. Much could have been done in the first decade after the war to avoid it. But the oversights of the past that we have inherited in the 1980's create obstacles to closer relations and friendship. The strengthening of the Tokyo-Washington military alliance (see p. 24) is being followed in the Soviet Union with understandable apprehension. Japan is talking of its fear of Soviet rockets and demanding "the return" of the Kuril Islands. So what is to be done?

In these circumstances broad-based exchanges between people with a view to achieving better understanding assume great importance. The "Peace Vessel's" visit to Nakhodka was a promising move. Our Japanese guests took part in the extensive programme organized for them and said they were pleased.

But even popular movements for peace, good-neighbourly relations and mutual understanding are not particularly effective when it comes to influencing the political decisions of states. This is an argument, however, that only plays into the hands of pessimists. "If I stay at home," West European peace campaigners say, "how can the government know I am against the nuclear threat?"

LEONID MLECHIN

A one-time Air Force pilot, former president of IBM, and U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. from 1979 to 1981, is piloting his own aircraft along the route Washington-Reykjavik-Helsinki-Moscow-Novosibirsk-Yakutsk-Anadyr-Alaska-Washington.

Thomas J. Watson:

"I like a challenge"

I had two aims, said Thomas Watson. On the one hand the flight is one of the most exciting adventures of my life. On the other, I wanted to draw attention to the present state of American-Soviet relations and the nuclear threat that hangs over us.

Why did you choose this particular route?

I first visited the Soviet Union as a student, when I travelled to China on the Trans-Siberian railway. But it was during World War Two that I got to know your country best. I was an Air Force pilot. Quite unexpectedly I was asked to act as Gen. Follett Bradley's pilot when he headed the American military delegation to Moscow. The aim was to reach agreement on delivery of military and civilian cargoes from the United States to the Soviet Union via Siberia. There was a lot happening at the time. I escorted Winston Churchill to Teheran, as our B-24 was well-armed.

One day when we were flying over Yakutsk, one of our engines packed up completely while the other barely kept going. It was a miracle that we managed to land the plane. It's true that thanks to the landing I spent two unforgettable weeks in Yakutsk and met many wonderful people. Incidentally, we flew home on a Soviet aircraft, as ours could not be repaired.

In general, I like to challenge fate and circumstances. For a time I turned my back on business and was Ambassador to Moscow. That was when relations between our countries were very cool because of Afghanistan. But it was then that I spoke of my wish to fly my wartime route and re-visit places that held many pleasant memories. I made friends with Georgi Arbatov. I told him about my unconventional project and asked for his help. And then quite unexpectedly, three months ago in New York he told me that I could make the flight. I came to Moscow with a second pilot - the captain of IBM's pilots, my grandson and several staff members from the Brown University Centre for Foreign Policy Development.

You have been an Air Force pilot, a businessman and a diplomat. Your career has on many occasions led to contacts with the Soviet Union. How do you think Soviet-American relations can be improved? What is holding up such an improvement?

For the past eight years I have been trying to convince my compatriots that we are sitting on a time bomb. I want to make people understand that tense relations with the U.S.S.R. bode no good for America. If over the next 45 years we continue to move in the same direction as we've done over the last 45 years, our children and grandchildren will be the last men on earth. Something has to be done, and now is the time to do it.

What stands in our way? I'd say, mutual suspicion. Most Americans, from way back in the period of your revolution, have reacted to the very word "communism" as a threat to their possessions, and even to their lives. That is a feeling that is hard to overcome. But a certain shift in approach is being felt as the public begins to appreciate the nuclear danger.

At the official level our countries are still unable to walk in step. In the Soviet Union the situation is now favourable to improving relations with the United States. In our country the reverse is true. I hope the situation will soon change in the United States as well. New approaches will have to be sought.

What do you think of the prospects for economic cooperation with the U.S.S.R.?

I would like to see more joint ventures, joint projects. We have the experience. Many of my business friends have cooperated fruitfully with the U.S.S.R. But before such a major company as IBM can have closer contacts with you, overall relations between the two countries will have to be improved.

During your present visit to Moscow you signed a Memorandum of Agreement between the Centre for Foreign Policy Development at Brown University and two Soviet Academy of Sciences' institutes: of U.S.A. and Canada Studies and of Space Research. What is the substance of the agreement?

We agreed on a programme of joint research. Specifically, on the parameters for mutual security for the U.S.S.R. and U.S., and ways of achieving them. We also plan to organize several meetings on Soviet and American territory to discuss the following questions: principles and categories of mutual security; approaches from positions of mutual security to the problems of nuclear arms, (among them the role of control over armaments and strategic defence), the problems of conventional weapons, the concept of unprovocative defence and the political situation in Europe and the North Pacific.

And so Thomas Watson, prominent American businessman and courageous private individual, threw down his challenge - a challenge to obsolete approaches to relations between the two countries on which the fate of mankind largely depends. By the time we go to press, his small jet plane should be landing on American soil. We wish him luck.

GALINA SIDOROVA
EVGENY ANDRIANOV

THE TRUTH, ACTION, PROGRESS

SOLTAN DZARASOV

Aren't we going too far in our self-criticism and revealing our innermost secrets for all the world to see? Do we not thus undermine the prestige of our social system? One often hears such questions today, and by way of answering them I should like to discuss the close connection between the memory of a nation and its social progress.

For all its ruthlessness, our self-criticism seems to me cathartic; without it we cannot make good progress along the right track we are now on. Obviously, however, criticism as such, no matter how severe, is worthless unless we follow it up by removing the shortcomings that have come under fire, and work for practical improvements. We must prove our commitment to the Party's political line of reconstruction and acceleration not by words and resolutions, but by effective action.

FOR ALL ITS RUTHLESSNESS, OUR SELF-CRITICISM SEEMS TO ME CATHARTIC; WITHOUT IT WE CANNOT MAKE GOOD PROGRESS ALONG THE RIGHT TRACK WE ARE NOW ON.

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We have achieved certain successes over the past year. Our national income has grown by 4.1 per cent as against the previous five-year period's average annual increase of 3.2 per cent. Industrial output has grown by 4.9 per cent, and farm produce output by 5.1 per cent, which figures also surpass the averages for the previous five-year period. Our national economy has exceeded the basic production targets set for the first year of the current five-year period.

Nevertheless, the progress made by our economy towards higher work efficiency and better product quality cannot satisfy us. The rate of our scientific and technological progress could be much faster. The same applies to the rate at which engineering products are being updated. We are aware of other shortcomings to be put right, and criticism is the starting point for this effort. We know from experience that criticism is a means of mobilizing the nation's collective wisdom to solve outstanding problems in the most rational ways.

Criticism is all the more fruitful the more information is made available to the people and, consequently, the better they are equipped to draw objective conclusions about everything. Unfortunately, we lacked in such openness in the past. Statistics pertaining to the development of the national economy, for instance, were classified information, which prevented our social science from making sufficiently realistic judgements about the processes then current in the country's economy. A state can be likened to a woman; out of elementary politeness one refrains from prying into her intimate secrets. An over-secreted woman, however, can hardly expect to be trusted. The same is true of a state. However, concealing the truth or saying only part of the truth do society more harm than good. Arbitrariness, abuse of office and corruption, many cases of which have been now disclosed, were fostered by, and thrived on a situation where too many spheres were taboo and kept away from the public eye. Therefore, openness and truthfulness have become for us not only means of knowing more about our own society, but of restoring mutual trust into the bargain.

A one-sided account of our historical experience has interfered - and still does - with our understanding of our problems. What is perestroika? At times we are offered a narrow interpretation of its content, according to which it boils down to eliminating the negative phenomena rife in the economy and in the social sphere at the end of the seventies and in the early eighties. These phenomena resulted from the fact that the former leadership, owing to its conservatism and inert thinking, had failed to realize in good time the need for changes and the danger of increasingly pronounced economic disorders, and work out ways of overcoming them.

All this is perfectly true. At the same time, however, several other questions arise. If the negative phenomena have arisen from errors of judgement on the part of the former leadership, then it should be fairly easy to put things right - even, it would seem, without resorting to revolutionary measures.

The campaign for reconstruction now underway, however, is aimed at solving a wide range of fundamental problems involved in strengthening socialism: the improvement of economic relations through encouraging everyone to take a proprietary interest in his work; the promotion of the principles of self-management; the democratization of socio-political life; the pursuance of an active social policy; the assertion of new thinking and new methods of dealing with international conflicts.

Such profound and extensive changes are vital for the functioning of our social system as a whole. Now the question is, to my mind, is it our objective to correct the mistakes of the past or to carry through the work of our revolution which, for historical reasons, we have fallen short of? If the former is true, we have almost made it. In the latter case, truly revolutionary reconstruction is needed. But to begin with, we must look deeper into our history and find out what those tasks were and why they have not been accomplished.

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It is on historical record that no revolution attains its objectives rightaway. The English Revolution of the 17th century and the French Revolution of the 18th century brought about profound reforms in the economic sphere and replaced feudal with bourgeois ownership. In their early stages, violence was an indispensable factor of such reforms. The lesson of those revolutions was that force, as Marx put it, is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. As a result, crowned heads went to the scaffold. The British bourgeoisie used Cromwell and the French bourgeoisie Bonaparte as their instruments. Only the American revolution did not go through the stage of a one-man dictatorship. It assumed the form of a struggle against foreign domination, which always rallies a nation.

In time, as it negotiated the reefs of revolutionary protest in monarchistic zigzags, the bourgeoisie evolved, at a relatively peaceful stage in the development of the revolution, the parliamentary system as a form of political rule suiting its interests.

The October Revolution differed from the bourgeois ones in principle. Having broken out in the course of World War I, the Russian revolution united different forces and trends. It carried bourgeois transformation to their completion and initiated

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socialist ones unprecedented in depth and scale. Having gone through the crucible of the world and civil wars, the people of the land these conflicts had laid waste to got down with revolutionary enthusiasm to peaceful construction within the framework of the New Economic Policy. It is hard for the present generation to imagine how sharp the turn to the New Economic Policy (NEP) was. Initial notions of how to go about building socialism were somewhat utopian. There were plans to put the communist principles of product exchange and distribution into practice without delay. The critical situation of the early twenties showed that such notions were untenable. The party, headed by Lenin, allowed peasants and small traders to engage in free enterprise. Instead of being assaulted head on, private capital was besieged. The idea was gradually to oust capitalist elements from economic circulation, and so lay the foundations of socialism.

This economic policy was initiated by Lenin. Though often pictured as a demi-god or a prophet, he was neither. But no other revolutionary had ever matched him intellectually or conceptually. Lenin realized full well that economic problems could only be solved given the appropriate political prerequisites. After the changeover to the NEP, therefore, he had no choice but to consider ways of gradually promoting fuller democracy. As early as then he suggested measures to strengthen the proletarian state and encourage grassroots initiative. Lenin urged effective public control, higher labour and management efficiency, absolute openness, the appointment to administrative bodies and individual executive positions by election, the voters' unlimited right to recall deputies, and so on.

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In seeking to create a system of socialist democracy, Lenin pinned his hopes on the party, above all, as the guiding force in society. When already seriously ill, he dictated the now well-known "Letter to the Congress" which opened with the following words: "I would thoroughly recommend that this Congress make a number of changes in our political system." He suggested, first and foremost, a reform aimed at increasing intra-Party democracy and ruling out the danger of a split, lest conflicts between factions within the Central Committee should too seriously affect the destiny of the Party. Lenin proposed, in particular, that the number of Central Committee members be raised; that the Central Committee step up its control functions and enlist the support of local working class organizations in this work; and, furthermore, that Stalin be removed from the post of General Secretary as a man incapable of making proper use of power and ensuring Party unity.

Having recalled the mistakes made by the then leaders of the Party, Lenin pointed out that they should not be held personally responsible for these mistakes. Such a position was prompted, of course, by the desire to keep the Party united in the face of the historical tasks then confronting it. Lenin's will, addressed directly to the Congress, was never complied with. The letter was not submitted to the Congress. In order to prevent it from being discussed, it was read out only to individual delegations.

To our loss some other articles by Lenin, which were in the nature of a political testament were for too long unknown to the Party and the people. The democratic practices and traditions of our Party and state were established in Lenin's lifetime, if not initiated by him personally. The congresses of the Party and the Soviets, the plenary meetings of the Central Committee, and sessions of the Councils of People's Commissars and of the All-Union Executive Committee, were forms for the businesslike and creative discussion of pressing problems: different ideas and opinions were put forward, and no one - Lenin included - was immune for criticism. Lenin cherished the traditions of full-blooded life and free discussion at all levels: he was convinced that freedom of expression was an indispensable prerequisite for social health and progress.

The departure from the principles and goals of the revolution after Lenin's death did not, however, change the socialist character of our society's development. As we advanced along the road opened up by the October Revolution, we achieved historic successes. The country has become a highly-developed industrialized power with tremendous economic, scientific and technological potential. The nation has attained high educational, cultural and living standards.

Nevertheless, the effects of this departure did make themselves felt. Wrong practices distorted our cause and were at variance with revolutionary ideals and goals. As a result, the dictatorship of the proletariat, instead of enhancing socialist democracy and promoting self-government by the people, assumed the form of a bureaucratic one-man dictatorship, which came to be known as the "personality cult."

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The developments of the recent past have shown that no assurances can, of themselves, prevent relapses into such deviations from our ideals and principles. The only guarantee against such relapses is provided by the democratization of state and party life carried out during reconstruction, and by promoting socialist self-government by the people and openness. The democratization now underway is not modelled on the way of life of other countries, as our Western critics allege. This is not to say that what all the other countries are doing is bad - we are prepared to adopt the best of what they have to offer. Democratization stems from the inner logic of our October Revolution, carrying on the cause initiated by Lenin, by our fathers and grandfathers. In order to carry it through, we don't have to abandon our ideology as émigré intellectuals suggest. Moreover, the scale of today's democratization calls for the further strengthening of the genuinely socialist character of our ideology, which guarantees rather than restricts creative freedom.

THE PEOPLE'S MEMORY SHOULD RETAIN NOT ONLY POSITIVE BUT ALSO NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES, FOR THEY ARE OF NO LESS IMPORTANCE FOR ITS PRESENT AND FUTURE.

A thinker worthy of the name cannot possibly call into question the objectives and underlying principles of our society. In spite of everything, we take legitimate pride in what our nation has achieved over the past seventy years. There is no denying these achievements. There is also, of course, a great deal to be discarded, and we are doing just that in order to promote and enhance our democracy - ours, mind you - for Western-type democracy does not suit us.

Not all aspects of socialist democracy are as yet sufficiently clear. So we have to get busy finalizing them, drawing upon our own and others' experience. Much will certainly have to be examined, changed and improved.

In order to achieve this, we must get a deeper insight into the historical meaning of what is happening, and learn the whole truth about ourselves and the world around us. The past does not disappear without trace, but remains in us and imperceptibly conditions our thoughts, emotions and actions. The people's memory should retain not only positive but also negative experiences, for they are of no less importance for its present and future. Knowledge leaves no room for blind faith and gears the nation's efforts to a conscious purpose. An objective analysis of our whole historical experience will afford the people a clearer idea of the motive forces, directions and prospects of social progress. ■

Meetings on the bridge

From our special correspondent
ALEXANDER PUMPYANSKY

We were being driven across New York and I was cursing everything on earth, but most of all the weather. Despite the dense fog, Aeroflot pilots had brought our Il-62 to the right place at the giant Kennedy airport and to the applause of their passengers landed us so gently that we did not notice the exact moment when we touched down. Then came the usual luggage and document procedures - a mixture of official hair-splitting and indifference; the last questions from customs officials: were we bringing any food into this satiated country? But no, no forbidden fruit, no apples of discord were found in our luggage and, finally, in the small bus, whose sleek form resembled a catafalque, we were driven down the highway leading to the city. But what kind of journey is it when all around you are surrounded by a milky mist? The vagaries of the heavens robbed us of the joy of first impressions, the joy of a long-awaited reunion. The Manhattan skyline can usually be glimpsed from the Triborough bridge, but where had it got to? Perhaps in the ten years since I had last seen it, it had disappeared? Or was it just a mirage, a cardiogram of memories?

The vagaries of the heavens

The fog grew denser and denser. Even glued to the window of the microbus, one couldn't see anything. Was it Manhattan or Moscow we were passing? Meanwhile the bus was already on the George Washington Bridge and we were in another state.

Everything annoyed me. I railed against the organizers of the trip. To invite people from the Soviet Union for two weeks and confine them to New Jersey. As if a visit to America was an everyday occurrence. As if each of us could come to the United States another 49 times.

How attentive our hosts were! They shot us like arrows through an invisible city, switching from the highway to local roads, and brought us in just about an hour and a half to a heaven on earth. At least that is what it looked like next morning when we got up to find a brilliant sun and blue skies: the wooded land covered by the last snow looked beautiful. The trails of deer and hares only emphasized its seclusion. The idea of civilization seemed out of place. The Carmel Retreat - that was all we needed. To have travelled ten thousand kilometres and crossed the ocean - just to end up alone with oneself. We hadn't come for a rest!

...Then I cursed New York. For three days we shuttled along Paterson and its environs. For three days the majestic skyline of the city could be glimpsed on the other side of the Hudson River, appearing then disappearing, like a mirage. Until, that was, someone heard my secret prayer and took us on an excursion to the city. Once again we crossed the George Washington Bridge - the two-tiered giant that spans the great and wonderful river, without disturbing its quiet waters as they flow towards the ocean. Ten years ago I used to drive along the river and past the bridge almost every single day for six months, as the offices of Komsomolskaya Pravda were on the western side of Manhattan, and I could never have enough of the pleasure by this quiet backwater, in a city where tranquillity is only something you dream of.

And I had come back, but it was a strange return. It evoked no memories. There was no sense of surprise, yet no joy of recognition. Harlem on Sunday... Central Park... Fifth Avenue. Our bus seemed to have deliberately followed a once-familiar route. But it was just that one view followed another through the window.

No one was to blame. The city was preoccupied with itself. Ten years ago it had captured the imagination of one man, but that was an event in his life, not the city's. So what? The fish in the aquarium can't blame the life outside. But a fish wouldn't dream of doing so, it's too cold-blooded.

So one has only oneself to rail at. For having changed. For having forgotten the past. Because so many years have passed, passed for ever and seemingly left no trace. For expectations that were senseless. What could I have expected? A ride in a bus is not enough to feel the pulse of the city. A single building or view mean nothing.

And then... From the 107th floor of the World Trade Centre, we looked out on all of New York, the whole incomparable panorama of the city stretching high and far, with its avenues as veins and streets as arteries. The 300-metre height swallowed the noise and dissipated the odours and the soot, and hid from our view the hubbub of cars and people. Moreover, it liberated us from details. In some strange way it introduced logic into chaos, revealing a majestic calm in what is undoubtedly the most frenetic of human settlements.

Surprisingly, at this incredible height there was no feeling of giddiness - could that be because the twin towers of the Trade Centre, although higher than anything else around, were not arrogant upstarts but they were surrounded by a multitude of other skyscrapers of different heights, shapes and dates of construction. So the human eye was prepared for such a seemingly improbable scale.

I calmed down.

In fact, I had not expected to be enchanted again; rather, I was afraid of being disenchanted with all I had felt and understood about the city ten years ago. But now the same city was before me - the most striking, most paradoxical, and impressive child of the American national spirit and its social character, a reflection of its civilization with its pride and practicality, boundless energy, greed and technical genius, with its dauntless experiments, its new views on beauty and ugliness.

Then our bus dived under the Hudson into a long gloomy tunnel, the second route after The George Washington Bridge followed five days a week by those who work in New York and live in New Jersey. Soon we emerged from the tunnel into the bright daylight back in "our own" state, which looked so welcoming and quiet after the mighty heartbeat of the supergiant.

Discovering America and Russia

It is time to mention that we had also reached American shores by a bridge. U.S.A.-U.S.S.R.: Bridges for Peace - that is the name of the organization that had invited us to New Jersey. What does it organize - tourist exchanges? Yes. In the four years of its existence, a dozen American and Soviet groups have visited each other's countries. Tourist travel surprises no one in this day and age, but the Bridges are not just another travel agency. The main purpose of each visit is not so much sightseeing, as human contacts. Contacts with schoolchildren and teachers, doctors and priests, experts on Soviet-American relations, on questions of war and peace, on disarmament, on moulding public opinion, activists in the peace movement, the women's movement, and so on, and so on.

The Bridges were founded by a Vermont businessman, Clinton Gardner. Whether seriously or jokingly he said to me: "You Russians have an obsession with giants. If you agree to deal with a capitalist, he must be a Rockefeller or a Hammer - nothing less. But 80 per cent of American business is made up of people like me, with a turnover of a few million dollars a year."

It would be absurd to contend that the President of Bridges for Peace is wholly indifferent to the business side of things. But the distinctive feature of this, on the whole, non-commercial organization is something else. Its nerve, stimuli, bait is the idea of bringing together people in the two countries who are disturbed by the course of world events, concerned about the future, worried that the wheels of government policy are either turning in the wrong direction or are skidding. Tourism? Of course. But also, to no less an extent, a dialogue, all the more real because it is informal. And that might produce a people's diplomacy.

Everyone in the Friendship Bridges is something of a Columbus. He sets off on his voyage to discover - and first and foremost for himself - another world. And on his voyage he checks the old maps and charts drawn up by other people.

Joanna Kortright was a member of a delegation made up of people living in New Jersey. She visited the Soviet Union in the autumn of 1986 at the invitation of the Soviet Peace Committee (ours was a return visit, which was why we had to discover America in the State of New Jersey). Here is how Joanna described what prompted her to make the visit:

"When nations and foreign relations are at an impasse, it is people who must promote contacts among themselves to start a dialogue for a joint search for solutions.

I talked with friends and family, and was told that I was being naive in agreeing to this trip because I would certainly be used for propaganda purposes. I took this argument seriously, because at stake was my integrity. I went because at least the trip gave me the opportunity to talk to the Soviet people directly and convey my ideas to them.

As our group of fifteen crossed over on the Soviet airline, Aeroflot, I felt a deep sense of mission and pride. Each of us came for different reasons or expectations, but all of us wanted to make a difference, to reach beyond our normal lines and boundaries... I was unafraid and filled with anticipation."

What I liked particularly in Joanna's story was her expression "to make a difference." There are people who don't care. There are people who care, but believe that nothing depends on them personally: everything is preordained, even if it is the other way round. And there is also a wonderful category of people who believe that their participation could affect the course of events, change a situation - **make a difference**. It often happens that only a hair's breadth separates success from defeat. Or one voice. And it could be your voice.

What did Joanna Kortright discover on her trip?

"I was struck by the realization that Soviet students, not only at the University level but also the primary and secondary levels, study American history, geography, literature and language. I was also impressed by the efforts to teach about peace and global responsibility to students of all ages. At one school, we were greeted by students singing 'America, the Beautiful'....

"The Soviet women were capable women, taking part in Soviet society professionally and politically. Yet, like U.S. women, they were trying to balance careers with motherhood and family demands."

Simple discoveries, but their simplicity holds its own sensation and drama.

Another way of life and distant shores always beckon. But when you are told that life on those distant shores is **entirely** different... That what you will find there is not life at all, but one huge threat to your own life and your own shore... that the people there are not really human, not people... that it is an antiworld, and any contact with it is potentially explosive. Then ordinary discoveries that women there are women, that children on that shore are also at once the greatest joy in life and a headache for their parents, that people are people everywhere - it all becomes a political revelation.

Another participant in the Easter exchange between Christian churchmen of the two countries organized by Bridges, Rev. Dr Paul Diener, a methodist preacher from Pennsylvania, said: "I learned that the people of the Soviet Union love their land as much as we love our own. And I now understand why. Their land is another part of God's good earth, blessed with natural beauty and good black soil. It abounds with mountains, rivers and trees - especially white birch. I also learned that the Russian people are gifted and artistic, a people who love beauty, art and fine things."

The simple conclusions drawn by the Pennsylvania preacher are packed with polemical dynamite. Whether he wanted it or not, they cry out against social slander, humiliating inventions and labels. "Another part of God's good earth" cannot be an "empire of evil." Each meeting on a bridge is indeed fraught with the danger of an explosion, but they are peaceful explosions necessary to clear the way. What is blown sky-high are the platitudes, the propaganda stereotypes, the rubble left by ill-

intentioned policies. The road from man to man, from country to country is being cleared. The road to the truth is being opened.

From her trip to the Soviet Union Joanna Kortright drew the following conclusion: "Only by recognizing that stereotypes do exist can we begin to break them down. We must try to learn about the complexity of situations and institutions. We must see the 'human character' of each society. There must be accurate, better journalism."

That could be described as her personal decision, dictated by her inner voice, therefore reliable. Bridges for Peace help in the highly important matter of the personal vote, helping people decide their own stand on such major issues of contemporary life as the U.S.S.R. - the U.S.A., we and they, the unity and divisions of our world.

Bridges for Peace are bridges from country to country, as they go from person to person.

Hospitality in the home

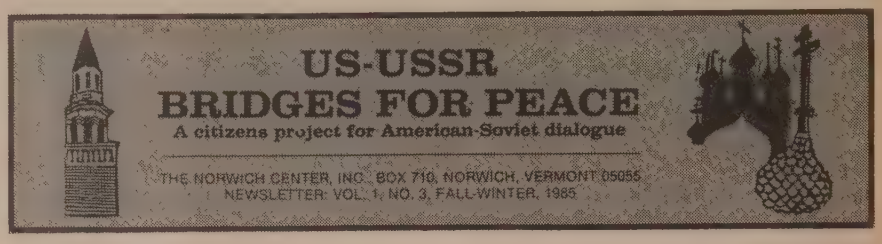
In New Jersey we did not stay in hotels, but in private homes. American prices being what they are today, when 100 dollars a night for a hotel room surprises no one, the organization's financial side is extremely important. But another aspect is in my opinion, even more important. As a member of a delegation you always feel on your guard. You represent not so much yourself but a group, a common cause. There is always the temptation to be on your toes, to reply with generalized phrases, rattle off whole paragraphs prepared in advance. Especially if your contacts take the form of collective, official ones - conferences, meetings, TV and radio interviews. You are asked about facts and you reply with assessments. Your individual views seem too private and therefore unsuitable, unnecessary. You look for the typical, average view. And as a result the colours fade, sincerity is lost, and trust dwindles away.

But in the morning over breakfast, when you discuss regional and national features of the world today, or in the evening after the programme for the day is over and you sit watching TV, you are more inclined to ask and answer questions about private lives, which in effect make up the life of society. You talk about children studying at university, which one, whether or not it is fee-paying, what will happen when they graduate, where they will work and live - with their parents or will they fly the parental nest and move to another town, state (republic) or country? And the questions and answers follow one after the other: from things to people, from people to circumstances, the way things are run, moods and experiences. From the individual to the general and back again to the personal. You feel empathy for people, because they reveal themselves with all their features - kindness and humour, doubts and hopes, persistence and fears. And you begin better to understand how their society works, a society based on different principles from your own.

In our discussions in the house we tried out everything we saw and heard on ourselves - it was easier to grasp it that way.

from the various discussions and meetings. Marjory organized some of these discussions and so we spent quite a lot of time together. Good-humoured, always ready to joke at her own expense or about circumstances, she was our invariable companion on the Paterson route - our hostess, driver and guide. Each encounter in the town had a beginning and an end. But our conversations with Marjory were only interrupted.

On my return home I found that the pivot of Paterson impressions around which everything revolved was probably the Bains family.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A citizens project for American-Soviet dialogue
THE NORWICH CENTER, INC., BOX 710, NORWICH, VERMONT 05055
NEWSLETTER: VOL. 1, NO. 3, FALL-WINTER, 1985

American hospitality differs from Russian or, say, Caucasian - and thank God it does. In our country a guest is unable to get up from the table - he has been over-dined and over-wined. We try to guess all his wishes, even before he himself has realized them. Our guest is our master and our sovereign: but he is also a prisoner of our hospitality.

American hospitality is based on the principle of maximum comfort for the guest. Special dishes will be prepared for you. And friends and neighbours will be invited to meet you. But the main thing is that you will be given the maximum freedom - this is your room, here's the bathroom, here is the fridge, the bar, the breakfast is at ... You choose for yourself - to join the family or to seclude yourself, to seek their company or to rest. Perhaps you'd like us to borrow some video tapes from the library? Or would you like us to take you somewhere? Anyway, you know where the key to the house is kept....

Our hospitality is insistent. American hospitality is more tactful. But in both cases the key to the house opens your heart and your soul. It becomes the key to society.

Marjory

In Paterson we stayed (together with another member of our groups, Olimpiada Butina, a worker at a Leningrad sweet factory, member of the parliament of the Russian Federation, mother of twins, expecting to be a grandmother at any moment, on her first visit to America) with Marjory and Jim Bainses. We saw Jim only early in the morning at breakfast or late in the evening when we returned

He comes from Texas, she, I think, from Nebraska. They settled down in Paterson twenty-odd years ago, when they bought the house - the house where Olimpiada and I stayed and which we remember with such warmth. They had three children. We met their student daughter. It was a busy time for her - exams were on, and what I remember best about her was the gay stoicism with which she fought the battle of the exams. The sons had long flown the parental nest. But the conversation turned to them again and again - and once in connection with a dramatic event.

We had touched on one aspect of life, and Marjory, as usual tried it out on herself. It concerned military service. Marjory explained, never underlining, that at different times it had been different in the United States. During the Vietnam war there was conscription. Her elder son had been called up, but he fled to Canada in protest. Now the army existed on a voluntary basis, but certain age groups were required to register - in case of mobilization. The younger son was due to register, but he refused point blank, as a matter of principle. Anti-war organizations believe there is no threat to U.S. security that warrants registration. On the contrary, the measure itself is a threat to youth and heightens tension in the country. What penalties would her son risk incurring? If tried - a prison sentence and a big fine. But perhaps nothing will happen. Tens of thousands of youngsters have refused to register - they can't all be taken to court. But it is possible that the Pentagon might think it necessary to stage several show trials - then things could be bad....

Marjory spoke in her usual quiet unemphatic voice. It made me think that this mild lady might have a will of steel.

Jim

With Jim we never managed a real conversation in his house. I really got to know him only on my return home. As we were leaving he presented me with some embarrassment with two reprints of his articles, which had apparently been published in the royalty-free educational publication "The Whole Earth Papers."

I am so glad he did.

The American merry-go-round had been replaced by Moscow's usual hectic pace. I was unable to get down to unpacking my luggage for some time, but now I know what a marvellous gift Jim Bains gave me. In Paterson we had lacked the time to talk, and he had generously made up for this by presenting me with his thoughts which, happily, he had had the time to put on paper.

Even judging from these two articles, Jim Bains, college lecturer and voluntary helper in various educational and charitable projects, was concerned about many problems, but most of all about the nature of social progress. So great are our technical achievements that he fears for the future.

"In many ways we have been successful. There can be no question that we now dominate the earth. We are perhaps more safe and secure from natural forces than at any time in history. We have made incredible strides in conquering disease and death from organic causes. We have greater wealth than ever before, although we still haven't learned to distribute it; and hunger and malnutrition could be completely eradicated if we could make the moral commitment to do so. We have the technical capacity to do so for the first time in history.

"But our successes have been purchased with massive failures. Our domination of the earth has led to disruption of ecosystems, destruction of more than 2,000 species, and to a growth of population and production which threatens the very well-springs of human existence itself. Safe from the elements and other creatures, we are an intense threat to ourselves. We are fragmented, alienated, and frightened. We have diminished souls and constricted our spirits. We die of our own gluttony, which we avidly hoard to ourselves while others die of our greed."

I looked for the publication date of this issue of the "Whole Earth Papers." It proved to be the autumn of 1977.

Jim Bains' second article is not dated, but it seems to belong to a later time. It is devoted to the position of senior citizens in American society. A wonderful analysis, combining investigative depth and great warmth, it leads the author up to the need to consider the effect of military expenditure on the problem. Why? The answer is provided not even by algebra, but simple arithmetic: a cut in a military orders by one Trident submarine with nuclear missiles would allow the allocations for the oldaged to be increased sixfold.

Here are some of Jim Bains deliberations about the social effect of military expenditure:

"Military spending is justified on other grounds. It is said it is needed for national security; yet the very effort to purchase that security contributes to the insecurity of individual citizens.... It erodes personal resources."

"Military buildups produce a state of paranoia and distrust that creates the likelihood that anger and frustration will be irrationally and uncontrollably mobilized. No country can afford to risk being conservative in their estimation of the other's power or their willingness to use that power, and so each response is inevitably greater than it has to be to maintain a true balance. Also, the actual presence of military buildups by opponents seems to verify the ugliest suspicions of the countries involved. Each can say, 'you see, I told you they were out to get us, and that proves it.'"

Back home at my familiar desk I continue my dialogue with that wise and humane American, whom I had the honour of meeting and whose hospitality I even had the privelege of enjoying - Jim Bains of Paterson. I compare his ideas and conclusions with my own and find many points of contact. And I think that my personal bridge across the ocean has another reliable pillar of support.

New York - New Jersey - Moscow

IN RETROSPECT

Our common victory

On July 7, 1937, during the night manoeuvres by Japanese troops, in a Peking suburb a Japanese soldier "disappeared." Japanese units sent out to search for him opened fire on territory controlled by Chinese troops. And although the soldier was soon found, bitter fighting started. This marked the beginning of a new stage in Japan's aggression against China. It was the beginning of the Chinese people's war of resistance against the Japanese invaders.

In the face of this deadly threat, the Chinese Communist Party called for an end to the civil war in the country and for the unification of all patriotic forces to repulse the enemy. The Communists attempted to set up a United National Resistance Front....The popular movement for the defence of the country forced the Guomindang to respond to the communist appeal. The formation of a United Front was proclaimed on September 23, 1937. This opened up the way for help to China from outside.

The Soviet Union came to China's aid. A Soviet-Chinese treaty on non-aggression was signed in August, 1937, and it greatly strengthened China's position in the struggle against the Japanese invaders. In keeping with a special decision of the Politbureau of the CC All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the Soviet Union made big credits available on the basis of which it supplied China with military hardware - aircraft, tanks, artillery and other materials. Thousands of Soviet volunteers went to China. Military cargoes were sent along the almost 3,000 km-long highway built across Xinjiang province. Soviet instructors helped train officers and technical experts for the Chinese army. And Soviet military advisers participated in drawing up operational plans for the Chinese Command, as well as taking direct part in the military operations. The support provided by the Soviet Union helped China to organize its resistance to the enemy.

The U.S.S.R. sided with the Chinese people until complete victory had been won. In fighting selflessly against the main force of the fascist bloc - Hitler's Germany, the Soviet Union was also bringing closer the day of China's liberation from Japanese militarism. "Our people fully understood," the Communist Party of China stated in its Declaration of July 7, 1941," that the war waged by the Soviet people is directed not only at the defence of the U.S.S.R., but also at the defence of China, and the defence of the freedom and independence of all people. The victory or defeat of the U.S.S.R. will mean victory or defeat for China...."

During the Patriotic War the Soviet Union was compelled to maintain several dozen divisions on its Far Eastern borders and thus kept the main force of the Japanese ground troops - the Kwantung Army stationed in North-East China tied down. This proved to be of great importance in the Chinese people's war against Japan. In turn, the hostilities on the Chinese front kept a proportion of Japan's forces tied down, making it impossible to use them to attack the U.S.S.R.

After the defeat of the nazis, on August 9, 1945, the Soviet Union entered the war against militarist Japan. In its closing stages the Soviet Union and China fought side by side againsts the common enemy. When liberating North-East and Northern China, the Soviet Army and the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army coordinated their operations with those of the People's Revolutionary Army of China.

BORIS BORODIN

TAKING UP A POINT

THE ELIMINATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IS KNOWN TO BE ONE OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES' GREATEST ACHIEVEMENTS. HOWEVER, I READ RECENTLY THAT IN HUNGARY UNPROFITABLE FACTORIES ARE TO BE CLOSED, WITH MANY WORKERS NATURALLY FINDING THEMSELVES OUT OF WORK - FOR A WHILE, AT LEAST. COULD YOU COMMENT ON THE LAW ADOPTED IN HUNGARY TO THAT EFFECT?

Mohammed NADIR
Algeria

New Times correspondent MARINA SHAKINA replies:

Bankruptcy, unprofitability, employ

Chronic unemployment of the kind that is raging in the capitalist world is unknown in Hungary. The deployment of the work force inevitably caused there by plant modernization leaves no one without a job.

Let us now see why the law on closing down unprofitable factories has been adopted and what it will mean in practice.

The past two years have not been happy ones for the Hungarian economy: the national income growth rate has slowed down, and the foreign debt increased. This is a considerable burden on a country with a population of eleven million. Moreover, Hungary was hard hit by the fall in world market prices for farm products and raw materials, which are high on its export list.

The restructuring of the production pattern was intended to help mobilize internal reserves to make enterprises more self-sufficient economically. This involved raising labour efficiency.

It was at this juncture that the problem of unprofitable enterprises arose. A budgetary income redistribution system, under which deductions from paying enterprises' profits were made to sustain unprofitable ones, had functioned in Hungary for years. As a result, neither the former, nor the latter had any incentive to do better. What was the use of trying harder if the extra profit did not accrue to the factory itself, efficient producers reasoned. And the inefficient ones didn't lift a finger to improve their performance because they knew that the practice of budgetary funding would keep them afloat in any case. This practice did enormous damage to the national economy and increased the budget deficit. In 1985 alone, as much as 152.8 billion forints were spent on subsidizing non-profitable factories.

The law adopted in 1986 provided for the rehabilitation or closing down of unprofitable enterprises, depending on the circumstances.

Supposing a factory has met with economic difficulties, and can no longer operate efficiently and at a profit. If the competent authorities decide that a subsidy, loan or change in specialization can put things right, measures are taken to rehabilitate it. If closed down, a factory simply ceases to exist; its equipment and premises are sold off, or handed over to other factories and industries. If a factory is given another chance, its staff is usually streamlined; but if it is closed down, all the work force is dismissed.

So if a socialist factory proves insolvent, the state analyzes the situation, first trying to find out whether it can be rectified by granting the factory a credit or changing its specialization. If the analysis reveals that the situation is hopeless, then closing the factory down is the only rational thing to do. Rehabilitating or closing down a factory is a multistage process that involves the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Finance, a special committee, and interdepartmental commissions.

The new law stipulates that a factory cannot be closed down in certain cases - for instance, if it is impossible to employ its workers elsewhere in the same specialities.

It is also stipulated that in paying the debts of the factory to be closed down, the workers' interests should come first.

The government and the trade unions realize that the adoption of this new practice will not be free of conflict. The trade unions and the state cooperate in reducing such conflict to a minimum.

What are the early results of the reorganization of the Hungarian economy? On the one hand, the number of profitable enterprises and the demand for labour are growing; on the other, unprofitable ones are being closed down, and jobs killed as a result. For instance, the reorganization of four unprofitable industries is expected to kill some tens of thousands of jobs.

While the law was still in the making, the trade unions saw to it that the workers who lost their jobs remained financially secure. Trade unions had the following provision included in the law: the workers to be dismissed were to be given six months' notice and keep their average wages throughout that period. The leadership of the All-Hungary Trade Union Council believes that six months is long enough for most workers to find new jobs (there are ample vacancies in Hungary). According to trade unions'

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613 persons were out of work
reasons in the second quarter
although there were 75,000
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No return to the past

Here are some of the letters we've received from Soviet readers sharing their ideas about perestroika and glasnost in the U.S.S.R.

Tremendous reconstruction is now underway in our country. Old and obsolete notions are being discarded, and new ones are taking their place. Inertia is sometimes hard to overcome, all the more so as certain people have already adapted to the new situation; they express criticism, address audiences, and engage in a semblance of debate - in short, they go through the motions of "vigorous activity." Wouldn't we do better get down to the work assigned to us without further ado and tackle it conscientiously, and not for the sake of the mere show that the overzealous "self-critics" are so good at?

It's about time we learned to identify those who pay lip service to perestroika while looking for ways of reversing things.

R. PARSOLASHVILI
Chelyabinsk

I think Comrade Bovin had too little to say about the Stalinist period of our history (No. 5, 1987). He should have dwelt on it at greater length. I lived through that period, and I remember well the price we paid for collectivization and for our victory in the Great Patriotic War...I remember the early postwar years as well. It was those years that gave rise to servility, eyewash, corruption, red tape - all the prerequisites for economic and social stagnation and near-crisis discussed at the latest plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. This must not be passed over in silence lest such things happen again. This period cannot be erazed from our memory.

I'd very much like to believe, and I do believe, that the decisions of the 27th Congress and of the subsequent plenary meetings of the CPSU Central Committee will prevail. The Party is on the right track, and the forces that have managed, in spite of everything, to get the situation in this country into the correct perspective, will be able to carry the great cause of reconstruction to completion.

M. MEDVEDOVSKY
Lvov

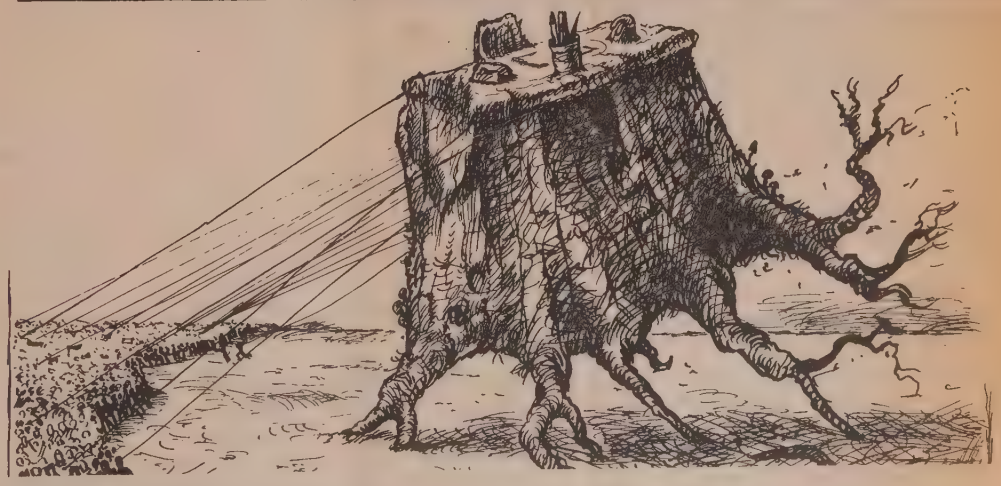
As I see it, glasnost means giving both the supporters and opponents of the reform - as well as those who have their doubts about it - an equal chance to speak up. I am for more polemics and more debates. Otherwise, what kind of openness are we talking about?

Z. ROMANOVSKY
Leningrad

As a veteran Communist, I wholeheartedly welcome perestroika. As I try to envisage the future, I keep thinking back to my Komsomol past, to the days when I was one of the young people who helped build a hydroelectric station and bridge across the river Ob. We worked then without remuneration...I still have vivid memories of the time when I worked on the building site of the Academic Town at the call of the Komsomol. I feel that we ought not to paint all our past a uniform black. Our country had its difficulties as it grew and built. But there have certainly accumulated some negative phenomena that must be eliminated by a resolute and uncompromising effort.

It is a shame that the advocates of the old order of things are trying to win some young people over to their side and make them doubt the success of our undertakings. This must be borne in mind and talked about as openly and frankly as we do about the lessons of history. There is no return to the past.

L.NOSYREVA
Novosibirsk



This is how the Soviet cartoonist Igor Smirnov sees one of the main tasks of the reform - weeding out bureacracy.

MAILED FIST OVER THE PERSIAN GULF

The situation in the Persian Gulf is deteriorating with every day. Instead of taking effective measures together with all interested parties to stop the senseless Iran-Iraq war thereby ensuring the safety of shipping, Washington is exacerbating the extremely tense situation and trying to use it to further its militaristic ends.

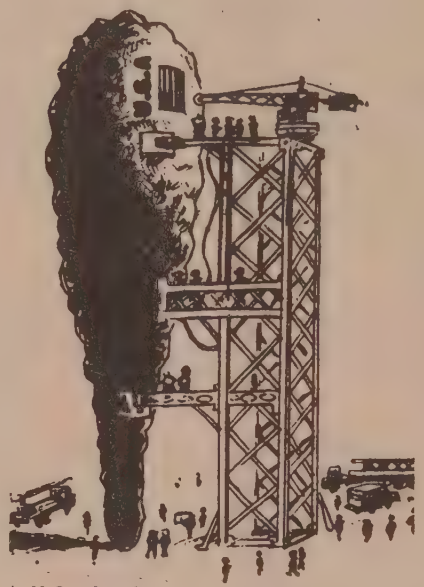
The Kuwaiti port of Mina al-Ahmadi is busy day and night. Mighty tankers fill their holds with thousands of tons of oil, pumped continuously through silvery pipelines stretching to the port from oil wells in the desert. On sating themselves the tankers heave off, to be replaced immediately by others waiting their turn in the harbour or close by in the Persian Gulf.

I was in Mina al-Ahmadi several months before the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. It was a symbol of Kuwait's prosperity. It is said that Kuwait is sitting on a sea of oil and its streets are paved with gold. Nobody questions the first contention - it has been confirmed by geologists. But I would quarrel with the second. Kuwaiti streets are far from being paved with gold for everybody and the country has plenty of problems. Today, however, the main problem for Kuwait is the Iran-Iraq war, now in its eighth year. Kuwait is neutral in the war but Iran is accusing it of giving financial and political support to Iraq, and claiming that arms and war materials are sent to Iraq via port Al-Kuwayt. And whereas some time ago Teheran confined itself to warnings and threats, its naval forces now launched operations in the Persian Gulf to intercept Kuwait-bound dry cargo ships and tankers leaving the country with its "black gold" in their holds. And still more recently floating mines have appeared off Kuwaiti shores.

The "tanker war"

One of them damaged a Soviet tanker, the Marshal Chuikov, on course for Mina al-Ahmadi to take on a consignment of oil. The tanker was badly damaged. Fortunately there were no casualties.

The Marshal Chuikov was not the first victim of the tragic events now occurring daily in the Persian Gulf and dubbed by the Western press the "tanker war." The first was a tanker under the Panamanian flag sunk on May 21, 1981.



A U.S. plan for the Persian Gulf. Drawing from the newspaper Al-Baath (Syria)

It is claimed that of the 314 tankers under various flags that have been attacked in the Persian Gulf in recent years, 219, or 70 per cent, were attacked by Iraq. The American frigate Stark sustained very serious damage in May 1987 and the lives of 37 American seamen were lost.

There are growing numbers of reports that the Iranian navy and air force are becoming increasingly active. In April an Iranian gunboat tried to intercept a Mobil Oil tanker carrying Saudi Arabian oil but was chased away by an American naval ship.

An Associated Press correspondent reported from Manama (Bahrain): "The Mobil Oil tanker incident indicates Kuwait could be "protected if the state-owned Kuwait Oil Tanker Co. registered its 21 operational tankers to fly the U.S. flag."

Several days later, the London Daily Telegraph reported: "Kuwait is to charter three Russian tankers in the hope that the Iranian air and sea forces will not dare attack them." The same newspaper also said that "the Kuwaitis have been negotiating with the United States as well as with Russia." Referring to "diplomats in Persian Gulf countries" the paper contended that the United States was already prepared to provide Kuwaiti ships with naval escort, but that this offer had been "temporarily" declined.

All these were by way of feelers to sound out the reaction of the international and American public, and a psychological preparation for what was to follow.

And what was to follow was a direct, utterly cynical military intervention with the aim of establishing a U.S. military diktat in that key oil-producing area of the world on the specious pretext of protecting Kuwaiti tankers from attacks by the Iranian navy and air force. This, rather than a real restoration of peace and security in the region was and remains Washington's aim. And so the American and West European bourgeois press began to sensationalize every single attack, or attempted attack, by the Iranian navy and air force on ships sailing in the Persian Gulf. Oil was added to the fire by reports from Western news agencies that Iran is deploying Silkworm missiles capable of "sealing off" the Strait of Hormuz.

A glimpse of history

Day after day the propaganda campaign painted an increasingly sinister picture of the situation in the Persian Gulf, prompting the conclusion that Washington should intervene at once and take measures to ensure "freedom of navigation" in the Gulf, prevent the establishment of "Soviet control" over it, "protect" the oil-supply lines to the Western countries and Japan, and consolidate the position of the "free world" in the Persian Gulf.

Today official American propaganda is

fairly reticent about the paucity of fundamentally new elements in U.S. policy with regard to the Persian Gulf, and the fact that this policy has its roots in the past four decades. On the other hand it asserts that American ships have been "historically" present in the Persian Gulf region for forty years.

In this context the new information concerning the events of the autumn of 1980 that have seeped through into the press acquires special importance. It is now known that at the time Washington was planning a large-scale operation against Iran in the Persian Gulf area. The reckless operation undertaken by the Carter administration to free the American hostages ended in failure in April of that year. After that fiasco Washington hastily began to prepare a new action against Iran. It was timed for October as a "surprise" on the eve of elections in the United States. Special detachments began to be secretly deployed in Egypt and Israel. The then Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Zbigniew Brzezinski recalls now: "I convened a meeting in my office, on the instruction of the President, to plan another rescue mission." "The actions that made the most sense to me," he recalls, "involved seizing Kharg Island, Iran's main oil export facility, and imposing a naval blockade, possibly combined with air strikes."

This operation, like the American military exercises held shortly before it in the region, ws code-named Positive Leap-80. The purpose was to "mislead the Soviets." The Carter administration took Soviet counteraction into account and even instructed its analysts to investigate the possibility of a nuclear conflict. And it was just this fear of Soviet counteraction that forced Washington to give up its reckless venture, which could have led the world to the brink of catastrophe.

In March 1987, when preparations for the present American operation began, the Speaker of the Iranian organization Majlis Hashemi Rafsanjani recalled that the United States had already suffered a fiasco in Tebessa and was certainly aware that storms in the Persian Gulf are much stronger than in the desert around Tebessa (where the American commandos landed in April 1980). But Washington did not draw any conclusions from the fiasco. And once again Brzezinski has stated his view, asserting that "the Persian Gulf is a crucial strategic area for the United States, and we should take whatever steps are necessary to maintain our influence there." The same thought is echoed today by Reagan, Shultz, Murphy and Weinberger.

The brass hats

It appears on the surface that the belligerent statements of politicians do not have absolute support from the brass hats, the military. But the very real objections of the military with regard to the administration's policy of asserting and expanding the American presence in the Persian Gulf area are concerned entirely with "technical" problems. The Pentagon is prepared to assert this presence and its sole worry is how best to achieve this militarily. And it is trying hard. The Washington Post has reported that U.S. statements about the need to "protect shipping" and ensure an "uninterrupted flow of oil" are only a pretext for building up the American military presence in the Gulf area and that the U.S. administrtation's real aims have nothing to do with concern for other nations. The paper writes that **It is the Pentagon** that is the main driving force of the campaign over the Iranian missiles near the Strait of Hormuz. The paper says further that it is an old dream of the Pentagon to acquire landing rights for American planes at the Saudi Arabian air base in Dhahran. A fleet of tanker planes deployed there would enable American carrier-based fighter and attack planes to monitor the Persian Gulf and an arc stretching to Afghanistan, The Washington Post expanded.

The United States is already using bases in Saudi Arabia and Oman, where AWACS and R-3 (naval anti-submarine planes) are stationed respectively. Saudi Arabian bases particularly suited for F-15 planes are of special interest to the brass hats. Other countries of the region have rejected Washington's solicitations. But having whipped up military hysteria over the "threat to free navigation" and the danger of "Soviet penetration" in the Persian Gulf, Washington with growing insistence is demanding ever bigger "military privileges" for itself in the countries of the region, and even trying to create there a pro-Western military bloc. The American Senators John Warner and John Glenn recently visited the region with this aim. There are reports of a massive airlift of armaments to the Persian Gulf region from American arsenals in the United States, West Germany and Israel. There have also been earlier reports that up to 600,000 American troops have been stationed in 19 countries stretching from Pakistan to the ports of Kenya, and this on the pretext of "defending" the Persian Gulf. It was in fact before the incident with the Stark that the United States dispatched a naval squadron headed by the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk to the Arabian Sea. After the attack on the Stark it was decided to increase the number of ships operating inside the Persian Gulf from six to nine. (The damaged Stark is not included in the count). The Kitty Hawk has now been replaced by Constellation. Now the carrier group in the Arabian Sea is to be joined by the battleship the Missouri and three escort ships. The Missouri belongs to the same class as the notorious New Jersey, which once shelled the shores of Vietnam, and in February 1984 fired its main guns on Beirut and its outskirts. The Missouri is to be provided with computer discs on which are recorded detailed maps of Iran. These discs are to guide the Tomahawk cruise missiles with which the battleship has additionally been armed to "Iranian targets." It is now being asked whether or not these missiles should be used in a "preemptive strike" against Iran.

The Washington Post has reported the belief of retired and incumbent military leaders that the U.S. obligation to protect Kuwaiti tankers in the Persian Gulf is likely to result in a military response from Iran or heightened activity by terrorists. This could in turn require **a massive deployment** of American forces in the region. Specialists say that an escalation of the tanker war would require **several squadrons of F-15 fighters** based in the Persian Gulf area and **several AWACS early warning planes** for the protection of shipping. It is also said that, in the absence of land bases, **at least two more aircraft carriers would be needed.**

In August the United States plans to hold in the Middle East region a new round of the large-scale Bright Star military exercises with the participation of four carrier groups and detachments of the Rapid Deployment Force. The Egyptian newspaper Saut al Arab has reported that these exercises have acquired a particularly dangerous nature against the background of mounting American military presence in the Persian Gulf. The Bright Star war games coincide with the mounting of American air and naval operations in the Gulf.

The spectre of Lebanon

The American press is now increasingly recalling Lebanon: the collapse of Washington's venture in 1982 when it supported the Israeli aggression and then sent in 1,800 marines under cover of ships of the Sixth Fleet. After some 260 marines had lost their lives Washington was compelled ingloriously to evacuate the remainder. This was in April 1984. After the Pentagon had sent Congress a special report on measures for ensuring safety in the Persian Gulf, the Washington Post printed an article by David Ottaway claiming that the spectre of Lebanon is arising in connection with U.S. plans to reflag Kuwaiti tankers.

At a regular press briefing, Pentagon spokesman Robert Sims refused to comment the substance of the Pentagon report, merely saying that it "speaks for itself."

Radio Teheran has warned that if the Americans strike at the launch sites of Iranian missiles, the United States "will expose its nuclear reactors and other vulnerable installations to a risk of attack." It also announced the sending of 500 battalions of Guardians of the Islamic Revolution to the southern shore of the Persian Gulf. The Iranian official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) quoted Mohsen Rafiq Doust, Minister responsible for the 400,000-strong corps of Guardians of the Islamic Revolution as saying that Iran would not spare either American planes or American ships stationed in the Persian Gulf that show "signs of an impending attack on the Islamic Republic."

The Speaker of the Majlis Hashemi Rafsanjani has warned that if America "sheds one drop of blood in the Persian Gulf, there will be a river of blood flowing in the world." He also said that "if America fires one shot in the Persian Gulf....the outcome would not be within its control." The Iranian mass media today are reporting the readiness of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution to die martyrs' deaths in the struggle against the United States.

Just as in Lebanon in 1982-84, Washington is pressing its NATO partners to join it. At the recent meeting in Venice, Reagan tried to persuade the allies to make "their contribution." But nothing came of this, despite the presence of British and French ships in the Gulf and the fact that the former are even protecting vessels flying the British flag.

Gentlemen's games

Late in May, several weeks after Weinberger's order to American naval and air units to step up their activity in the Persian Gulf region, the following question arose: should the President, as he prepares to expand the U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf, abide by the War Powers Act? Adopted in 1973, this law requires Congressional approval for military operations. Congress reminded Reagan of this in September 1983, when it adopted a resolution to the effect that, as American armed forces are conducting combat operations in Lebanon permission for the duration of their stay to be prolonged would be needed in accordance with the Military Powers Act. At the time President Reagan was allowed to extend the presence of American troops in Lebanon for another 18 months but Congress demanded that it be informed of developments in the situation every 90 days.

But when it came to the Persian Gulf, Congress proved less resolute. After the Congressmen voiced a great deal of criticism of the administration and its policy, the House of Representatives voted for a bill according to which Reagan is obliged to inform, and only inform, Congress of the administration's plans in the Persian Gulf. In other words, this time the administration was effectively given carte blanche.

Then passions began to mount. Representatives of the Democratic Party began to talk about the need to restrict (but only temporarily !) the administration's activities in escorting Kuwaiti tankers. A resolution cancelling the administration's decision on these operations was even submitted for discussion. The Pentagon report to Congress on questions pertaining to U.S. policy and plans for American naval operations in the Persian Gulf was also discussed. Indeed, Congress demanded this information of the President when giving him a free hand. On June 30 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee adopted Bill S1327 to prevent United States involvement in hostilities in the Persian Gulf. This will belatedly block (if approved by the Senate and House of Representatives) the administration's actions.

But then all these gentlemen's games were abruptly curtailed. Immediately after the adoption of the aforementioned bill, President Reagan had a meeting with the leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives. S. Donaldson of the ABC television company described this meeting in the White House as follows: during the meeting with the President neither of the leaders of Congress, representing both parties, spoke in support of the Administration's plans to raise American flags on Kuwaiti tankers and provide them with a naval escort. The Democrats urged Reagan to postpone the implementation of these plans, but were not heeded by the administration. White House spokesman Fitzwater said that the preparatory work would be completed by mid-July. Administration officials are exploiting the fact that the leaders of Congress support the idea of safeguarding freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf (in other words, U.S. military presence in the Gulf and control of it! - **E.Korshunov**) S. Donaldson concluded his account by saying that although the Democrat leaders are calling for a postponement of plans to raise American flags over Kuwaiti ships, none of them is opposing these plans.

He then commented on the "prohibitive" bill adopted by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Although the Committee adopted the bill by a majority vote of 11 to 2, this does not mean anything, Donaldson went on, since it is not being supported by the Senate leaders, while the leaders of the House of Representatives are already saying that they, too, would not want to impede the President.

Does not all this resemble a pre-planned storm in a tea-cup?

Views and conjectures

Meanwhile, in practical terms, the procedure of reflagging 11 Kuwaiti tankers is nearing completion. For this purpose they were "sold" to an American company for seven million dollars, placed under the command of American captains and renamed. It is reported that they will soon set sail under escort of American ships, which will protect the Kuwaiti oil they carry. Of course this is a matter of relations between the United States and Kuwait, and at first glance there is nothing objectionable in this. But

The U.S. aircraft carrier Constellation on patrol.
From U.S. News and World Report

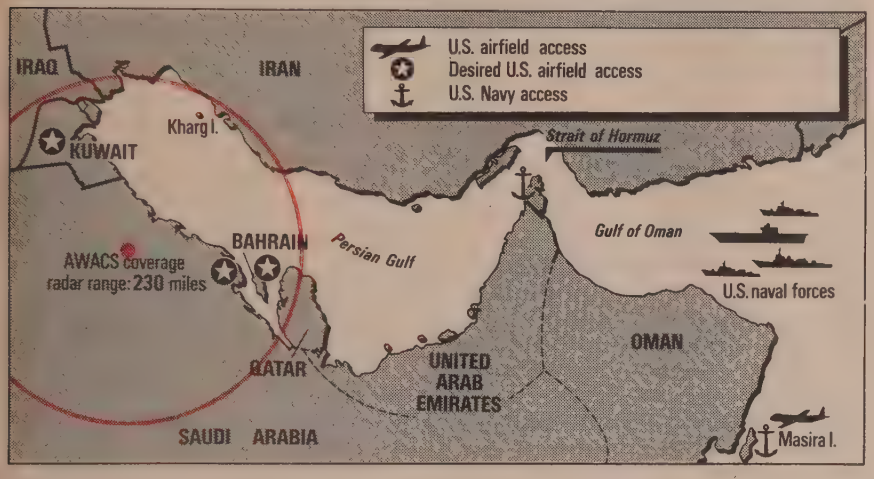
considering the intensity of the situation and the nervousness of the participants in the Iran-Iraq conflict, the U.S. ships and planes could find themselves drawn into hostilities in one way or another at any moment. In fact the situation is becoming increasingly expolosive. Both Teheran and Washington have their fingers on the trigger. The slightest, even accidental mistake or misunderstanding could trigger off an explosion.

It appears that in the circumstances Washington is basing its plans on the specifics of Iran's location. In March, when hysteria began to mount in the United States over the Iranian missiles in the area of the Strait of Hormuz,

diplomats in Middle East countries expressed doubt as to whether Iran would try to block the strait as it would itself be the first to suffer from this. This is easily appreciated. Iranian oil is exported through the Strait of Hormuz while Iraqi oil (especially since the start of the Iran-Iraq war) is pumped through pipelines via Turkey and Saudi Arabia. The closure of the Strait of Hormus would not affect Iraqi oil exports. On the contrary, it would benefit Iraq because it would deprive Iran completely of "petrodollars."

The New York Times has reported that Iran is interested in keeping the Persian Gulf open and avoiding a confrontation with Washington. The paper has reminded readers that in the course of the interests of Iran and not Iraq, and that after their "scathing criticism of the superpowers, Iranian officials now state they will come out in support of ending all attacks on ships sailing in the Gulf." It was also revealed at the same time that Teheran had asked the EEC to act as an intermediary in preparing talks on the situation in the Persian Gulf and a temporary ceasefire. According to American newspapers, Iranian representatives put forward proposals to stop the "tanker war" during talks with representatives of some countries.

"The policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is to try to maintain the freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf, and we will use our energy and resources to do that," said a spokesman for the Iranian



A map of the Persian Gulf region. Drawing from U.S. News and World Report

Irangate hearings Persian Gulf states were shocked to learn that the White House had clandestinely demonstrated a preference for Iran by supplying arms to it.

And here is the opinion of Iraq's Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz, outlined in an interview with the Baghdad newspaper Al-Thawrah. He believes the Americans are trying to use Iran's deployment of missiles at the exit from the Gulf as a pretext for stepping up their infiltration of the region. Iran would "strangle itself" by blocking the strait while the Arab Gulf states would find other ways of exporting their oil. Tareq Aziz said that this was an "attempt to play the Iranian 'political' card after its 'military' one was beaten (a hint about Irangate? - **E.K.**), an attempt to use the Iranian 'paper tiger' to fulfil plans of establishing hegemony over the strait."

The interview was published late in March, while in mid-June the American media again noted, referring to unnamed Arab "representatives" and "diplomats," that any increase in the protection of shipping in the Gulf would be in the mission to the United Nations. But The Washington Post assessed the Iranian proposal to stop attacks on ships in the Persian Gulf, guarantee freedom of navigation in it and conclude security agreements between Iran and a number of "conservative" Arab Gulf countries as no more than a counterbalance to the Security Council's efforts to draft a resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Persian Gulf, to be backed up by a threat of mandatory sanctions "against Iran if it continues to reject a negotiated solution to the conflict." The newspaper also recalled that Iran had reserved the right to conduct land-based military operations against Iraq and that on these grounds the United States had "rejected an Iranian proposal to end the tanker war in the Persian Gulf."

All this is very clear. For if the "tanker war" ends the United States will lose a "good" pretext for fulfilling its cherished plans in the Persian Gulf. Washington is banking on the "tanker war" just as it banked on "Irangate" to achieve these plans.

Will this ensure peace and stability in the region? Of course not. It will procrastinate it and lead it to a point of no retreat. The buildup of the opposing forces will only further aggravate an already crisis situation. The slightest miscalculation, even a single spark will be enough to cause an explosion, following which a conflagration will engulf the entire Middle East and perhaps the world.

It is easy to load a gun. It is much harder to unload it. And hotheads could appear who might want to unload it by firing a shot at an adversary. And the more such loaded guns there are lined up on both sides, the greater and more real is the danger of the outbreak of a lethal conflict. That is why the world public is following the development of events in the Persian Gulf area with such alarm and concern. That is why louder demands are being heard for an immediate end to the U.S.'s reckless behavior in the region and to the senseless Iran-Iraq war, and for the attainment of genuine peace and reliable security in the Persian Gulf.

A realistic road to normalizing the situation was proposed in a recent Soviet government statement. "Proceeding from the need to take resolute measures to improve the situation in the region," the statement says, "the Soviet government proposes that all naval ships of states not belonging to the area be withdrawn from the Gulf within the shortest possible period of time while Iran and Iraq, in turn, should refrain from actions creating a threat to international shipping."

In the Soviet government's opinion "such measures, the more so when carried out in the context of a comprehensive settlement of the Iran-Iraq conflict, would help defuse the situation and put an end to the danger of the expansion of this explosive seat of military tension."

Acting in the spirit of the new thinking the Soviet government proposes that all sides jointly take an active part in removing this hotbed, a hotbed already pregnant not just with increased tension but with the danger of war, search together for ways of achieving this and work out collective measures at all levels, in particular at the United Nations. How much we would all like the new thinking to make its appearance at last in the United States too.

But in response we again hear warnings from Washington about the "Soviet military threat" and allegations that if American ships leave the Persian Gulf their place will be taken by Soviet ones. At the same time, the almost "historical right" of American ships to be present in the Persian Gulf is being emphasised.

The events in the Persian Gulf show what Washington's real intentions are.

EVGENY KORSHUNOV

Young trade unionists meet

VICTOR MISHIN, Secretary,
All-Union Central Council
of Trade Unions

An international rally held in Paris at the beginning of July marked the opening of a meeting of young trade unionists representing 27 European countries. Then a special train took them to Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic. On July 8 close to 400 participants in the meeting crossed the Soviet frontier. The youth forum carried out the bulk of its work in the U.S.S.R.

The purpose of the meeting, organized on the initiative of the General Confederation of Labour, the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, is aptly expressed in its slogan: "Young trade unionists for dialogue and mutual understanding."

There had long been a need for such a meeting. Several participants in the 12th World Youth and Student Festival in Moscow in 1985 proposed to convoke such a forum.

The fact that the meeting has been held shows that a fresh young wave is emerging in the European trade union movement, and that forces deeply concerned about lack of confidence and desiring to establish it are making themselves heard.

The desire of young trade unionists in Europe to achieve understanding, learn more about each other and reach agreement on joint action for peace and social progress is quite natural. Unless understanding is reached, no productive political dialogue between East and West is possible. Young trade union activists are eager to work things out for themselves, unravel the complexities of European politics, identify the real source of the threat to peace and see what can be done to prevent a nuclear holocaust.

In appraising the current meeting and its role, the Soviet Union maintains that the trade unions of various countries are a potent force in the fight for peace and security which will, however, only be able to exercise a considerable influence on the policy of détente if they pool their efforts. This point was made clear at the 18th Congress of Soviet Trade Unions last February.

Young trade unionists in Europe are faced with many specific problems of their own. For instance, in the capitalist world young people are still among the most vulnerable socio-demographic groups. It should also be mentioned that not all trade unions (indeed far from it) everywhere are willing to take account of these problems, and effectively defend the right of the rising generation to work, a good education and healthy and constructive leisure and recreation. These factors cause certain sections among the young to be sceptical of the potential of the trade unions. For example, two thirds of all young workers in Great Britain are not trade union members. In France, only six-eight per cent of working young people are union members, with 18 per cent of the total labour force unionized. This benefits circles eager to weaken the trade union movement, isolate the different sections and generations of workers from each other, and discredit progressive mass working class organizations in their eyes.

The European meeting of young trade unionists has enabled young men and women to appraise their role and place in the working people's struggle for fundamental rights and, above all, for their most basic right - the right to life. In Pitsunda, a health resort on the Caucasian coast of the Black Sea, they discussed the most urgent problems of the day. At the round-table talks, they examined a whole range of vital questions, such as "Peace and Youth for Life in a Constructive Europe and on a Nuclear Weapon-Free Planet," "Protecting the Environment and Working for a Higher Quality of Life," "Youth, Their Leisure, Sporting and Culturtal Activities," "The Right of Young People to Vocational (Professional) Training, Work and a Worthy Life," and "Youth and the Trade Unions: Traditions of Struggle and a Glimpse into the Future."

Most of the participants were visiting the Soviet Union for the first time. They learned about Soviet life and our social achievements not only from talks, but also from meetings with work collectives in various towns and cities.

At these talks attention was always focussed on the processes of perestroika (restructuring), the renewal and democratization of Soviet society.

The Soviet delegation included young factory workers, office employees and members of student trade unions.

The young trade unionists of Europe pinned high hopes on this meeting - hopes for détente, understanding and cooperation. We hope they have been realized.

The pharmaceutical factory Polfa, well known in Poland and familiar to many in the Soviet Union, especially those who often have to visit the chemist shop - is situated about half an hour's ride from Warsaw in the small town of Grodzisk Mazowiecki. In the hundred years of its existence it has seen many changes and troubles. At first, the factory burned wood to produce activated carbon. During the wartime occupation the nazis re-equipped it for the production of explosives. And only in 1952, in keeping with a government decision, did it become a pharmaceutical factory.

When the Solidarity movement was flourishing, the factory again lived through a difficult time. Subsequently it was faced with new problems arising from the economic reforms begun in 1982.

The manager

That was when the new manager Zygmunt Jarczyk took over the factory.

"It is a comparatively small factory - 1,228 employees," Zygmunt Jarczyk explained. "It is operating smoothly now, with production increasing from year to year. Much of our output is exported."

But how did it all start? The factory was stagnating, there was no export trade. It also had a bad reputation with the local population, as Polfa had practically no purification installations and greatly polluted its surroundings.

The situation began to change following the introduction of a new economic system in 1982. It gave factories greater independence. Half the factory's profits could now be retained by Polfa and the manager was given the right to use the funds as he saw fit. After a year's work under the new system, production rose by 30 per cent. Exports increased sharply. To the Soviet Union alone, 61.2 million rubles' worth of drugs were exported last year.

From the very first profits the manager set aside a considerable amount for purification intsallations and new equipment. In the past, this could only be done through the ministry and the state planning committee, but they looked down on old factories as unwanted stepchildren. Polfa, however, proved to be a very industrious Cinderella. The granting of financial rights turned out to be something of a magic wand.

"How do you allocate the profits that remain in your hands?"

"We use them to provide material incentives for the workers," replied Zygmunt Jarczyk. "For social needs, the building of new homes, modernization of production, new machines. We could, of course, have divided up all the profits between the workers. But then what? We would have been in a fix. The old equipment could no longer be used, and

Socialist enterprise

What is socialist enterprise? What kind of people should run factories in a socialist society? Our correspondent went to Poland and brought back plenty of food for thought that could help answer these questions.

no one would give us money for new equipment."

What the money is to be used for is decided by the manager after consultations with the workers' council and the meeting of delegates (one from every ten employees). In this triumvirate, the manager has the right of veto - not for nothing is he the manager with full responsibility for the factory's operation. Should a conflict arise between the manager, the workers' council and the delegates' meeting, a special conciliation commission is set up. If the compromise it suggests does not suit the workers, the matter is turned over to a court. And the court's ruling is final.

When it comes to deciding on the work force needed, the manager has almost unlimited possibilities. He can, for instance, cut one section by half (with the trade union's consent) and keep the payroll intact. The personnel that remains reaps the benefits. That is why at the Polfa factory you will find no slackers. For the level of wages it pays Polfa comes 57th on the list of the 500 richest factories in the country, including the giant steel plants.

The manager can increase workers' wages twice a year, which is very important in view of the high rate of inflation (about 25 per cent over the year).

Because of Poland's large external debt, its factories cannot as yet make use of the foreign currency they earn, although officially they are entitled to 20 per cent of these earnings. Polfa's account stands at about a million dollars. As from this year it will be able to spend 5 per cent of this sum as it sees fit. The rest can be used after 1988 when, according to the republic's estimates, the foreign debt problem will be less acute. In the meantime, foreign trade organizations cope with all export problems.

I asked the director whether he would prefer to have direct access to foreign markets himself.

"That would be rather difficult," he replied. "You have to be familiar with the market situation and the potential of other firms, taking the strong competition into account. To conduct foreign trade on our own we'd need experts in this field, including people who would not accept bribes for a good contract."

The cooperative's chairman

In Warsaw the services industry is run completely by cooperatives. There are about ten of them. That may not seem a lot. But they are fairly big and very mobile, and they compete with each other - not with the state. I was shown one such cooperative, Czystosc.

Although we had agreed on a meeting in advance, we came to the cooperative at an inopportune moment. The financial inspectors were auditing its books. They never advertise the time of their arrival.

The chairman of the cooperative, Stanislaw Kostrzewski, is 37 years old, and for six of those years he has been at its helm.

"What is Czystosc doing?"

"We provide a wide range of services, from darning socks to laying hardwood floors and packing luggage. "

The cooperative has 420 full members, plus about 370 part-time pensioners, who are able to earn an appreciable sum to augment their pensions. There are nine specialized shops. One deals with painting premises and putting up wall paper, another lays tiles in bathrooms, a third washes windows and cleans up flats. In addition, there are 34 small branches where you can have your laundry washed and ironed, or clothes mended. Those employed at these branches hand over to the cooperative a certain sum stipulated in the contract, and everything they earn over and above that goes into their own pockets. But they have to pay the electricity and water bills, and that naturally ensures that they use them carefully.

Last year the firm's turnover came to 438 million zlotys, against 384 million in the previous year. Each member of the cooperative has to carry out work over the year worth 1,050,000 zlotys. The average annual earnings of a member amounts to 294,340 zlotys. In addition, there is a reserve fund, in case an outside specialist for some type of work, has to be invited.

It looks simple. But....

"The financial bodies," Stanislaw complained, "are always after our reserve fund. Yet I, for my part, can increase the wage fund (which, incidentally, is subject to a 20 per cent tax) only by 12 per cent a year. Even if we disregard inflation, it's still no good. It means that I cannot pay my people in proportion to the amount and quality of the work they put in, even if they work twice as hard. If the 12 per cent limit is exceeded, the cooperative has to pay a 500 per cent tax, and that would spell bankruptcy. I had one man who laid hardwood floors. He asked me: can I earn 80,000 zlotys a month? I told him - go ahead, the money will be all yours. And he went to it. All his mates laid 300 square metres, and he laid twice as much - 600. In the past, I could have paid him all he earned. Now there's the 12 per cent barrier. How to get around it? It's not simple, because these restrictions were introduced on the insistence of the International Monetary Fund, which provides Poland with credits on condition workers' wages are not increased."

Czystosc has existed in its present form since 1980. Before that it was part of a centralized cooperative association. It was a clumsy mechanism, hard to operate. In 1980 Czystosc went to court and got its own rules approved, and it has been independent since. In the past, chairmen were often appointed from above. Now the members elect their own chairman. Stanislaw Kostrzewski is well known. He began at the bottom, as an ordinary worker. Then he studied at the economics department and was deputy to the former chairman. Members of the cooprative felt they were taking no risks in putting him in command. The chairman is full of new ideas, he is on the lookout for clients and paying work, as well as where to invest the cooperative's money. He puts his ideas to the trade union, the party committee and cooperative council for them to adopt or reject. The chairman also has the right to

take risks, but if he loses he pays out of his own pocket.

Not an easy job. But Stanislaw is convinced that prices for similar services at state-run organizations would be much higher, if only because they require an administrative apparatus. The cooperative has reduced such staff to a minimum.

Stanislaw Kostrzewski has his own way of running things. For instance, he insisted that bonuses be paid to people who rarely take sick leave.

"I know perfectly well that sick leave is often taken after a drinking bout. We pay out 18 million zlotys a year in sickness benefits. Now we've decided to pay out 8 million in bonuses to those who do not take sick leave. The results were surprising. People practically stopped falling 'sick.' And they stopped drinking."

Those who wish to join the cooperative are required to do a probationary period of one year. If all's well, they then contribute their 13th wage to the cooperative fund and become full members. After that, like all members, they pay a monthly contribution of one per cent of their earnings. When they leave the cooperative, these contributions are returned in full. The chairman himself has amassed about 150,000 zlotys in contributions over his 16 years.

If members of the cooperative prefer, they can leave their 13th wage with the cooperative, which pays them interest at 19.5 per cent. Many do that, as there is a shortage of goods in the country, and they prefer to save for a major big purchase at a later date. As a result, the cooperative has substantial capital and does not have to resort to loans from the state. The interest they demand, the chairman said, is fantastic.

"If I came to your office and asked you to redecorate my home, how long would I have to wait?"

"Two-three days. And we guarantee both time and quality."

"And what about the cost? Does the state regulate prices?"

"No. But prices are moderate. Less than you would have to pay in other places. There are places that ask 3-4 times more than we do. That is why they go bankrupt, and clients come to us."

"You became chairman at a time of political crisis...."

"Some members of our personnel held different views. But the more sensible one won through. They believed in me. There was no serious antagonism, however. When martial law was in force, for instance, I took on a former activist from the factory Solidarity committee. He is still with us and working well. We often have very frank discussions. That's all to the good, for the truth is born of debate."

NIKITA ZHOLKVER
our special correspondent
Warsaw-Moscow

Why the missiles remain

Under an agreement proposed in Reykjavik, the Soviet Union was to retain 100 medium-range missiles in the Asian part of its territory. At the Venice seven-nation summit Japanese Premier Nakasone suggested to President Reagan that the United States deploy 100 nuclear missiles in Alaska, all targeted on the Soviet Union. Why was such an idea put forward?

"The elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe is a major step towards nuclear disarmament," the Japanese newspaper Asahi writes. "It will be a measure of tremendous importance, and we naturally welcome such a development. But as inhabitants of Asia, we are not very enthusiastic about this prospect, as the missiles are only to be scrapped in Europe and will remain in our region."

How can Asia get rid of missiles? The Soviet Union said it would abolish all its medium-range missiles if the United States agreed to remove the American nuclear weapons from Japan, South Korea and the Philippines, and restrict the movement of its aircraft-carriers in the Pacific. Moscow also expressed readiness to begin negotiations with Washington on this issue.

This proposal was dismissed by Washington. Japan claims that the SS-20 missiles are aimed at "a non-nuclear peace-loving country that has nothing to do with the military strategic confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union."

Let us see what the Soviet missiles are facing and what Japan's role is in the military strategic balance of forces in the region.

"Going for the jugular"

The Pacific is a vast area of operations for the U.S. armed forces.

The equipment of Ohio submarines with Trident-1 missiles has drastically augmented U.S. nuclear potential. Submarines of the Ohio type are intended for a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union. Each of them can fire 24 Trident missiles carrying 192 warheads. Deployed in the central part of the Pacific, they can hit targets in Soviet Central Asia. The Pentagon plans to have ten Ohio submarines in the region, to be equipped in two years' time with the still more powerful Trident-2 missiles.

Another menacing trend is the deployment of sea-based Tomahawk cruise missiles in the region. The strength of the U.S. Pacific fleet capable of delivering a nuclear strike is to increase from five ships in 1984 to fifty in 1990. By smashing coastal defences, Tomahawks will enable U.S. aircraft-carriers to move closer to the shore and strike at ground targets from the air. Admiral James Watkins, former Chief of Naval Operations, called this strategy "going for the jugular."

The Pentagon held in the past that a war, should one break out, would be fought in Europe. Today, a second theatre of operations - the Pacific - is planned. Moreover, the U.S. Navy in the region is prepared to strike at the Soviet Union immediately even if a conflict begins elsewhere.

The naval staff believes that an exchange of nuclear strikes will not inevitably lead to a global conflict, and is therefore preparing to wage a nuclear war limited to the Pacific theatre of operations. This explains U.S. reluctance to extend any nuclear disarmament measures to the region or reduce naval activity there.

The United States has considerably less restraints on the use of nuclear weapons in the Pacific than in Europe, where formally it has to consult the NATO allies. During his visit to Seoul in 1980, General Edward Meyer, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, noted with satisfaction that to start a nuclr war in the Pacific is "far simpler... than in Europe." Washington already has the experience of nuclear blackmail in the region. It has threatened to use nuclear

weapons against China, Korea and Vietnam. In 1983, the U.S. Seventh Fleet staged exercises simulating an attack on the Soviet Far East.

Japan has been assigned a key role in U.S. nuclear strategy. Turning down the Soviet proposal to destroy all SS-20 missiles if the United States withdrew its nuclear weapons from South Korea, the Philippines and Japan, a Foreign Ministry official in Tokyo claimed that there were no nuclear weapons in the country. Is this the case? Diplomats are said to have tongues in order to conceal the truth.

In a quiet town

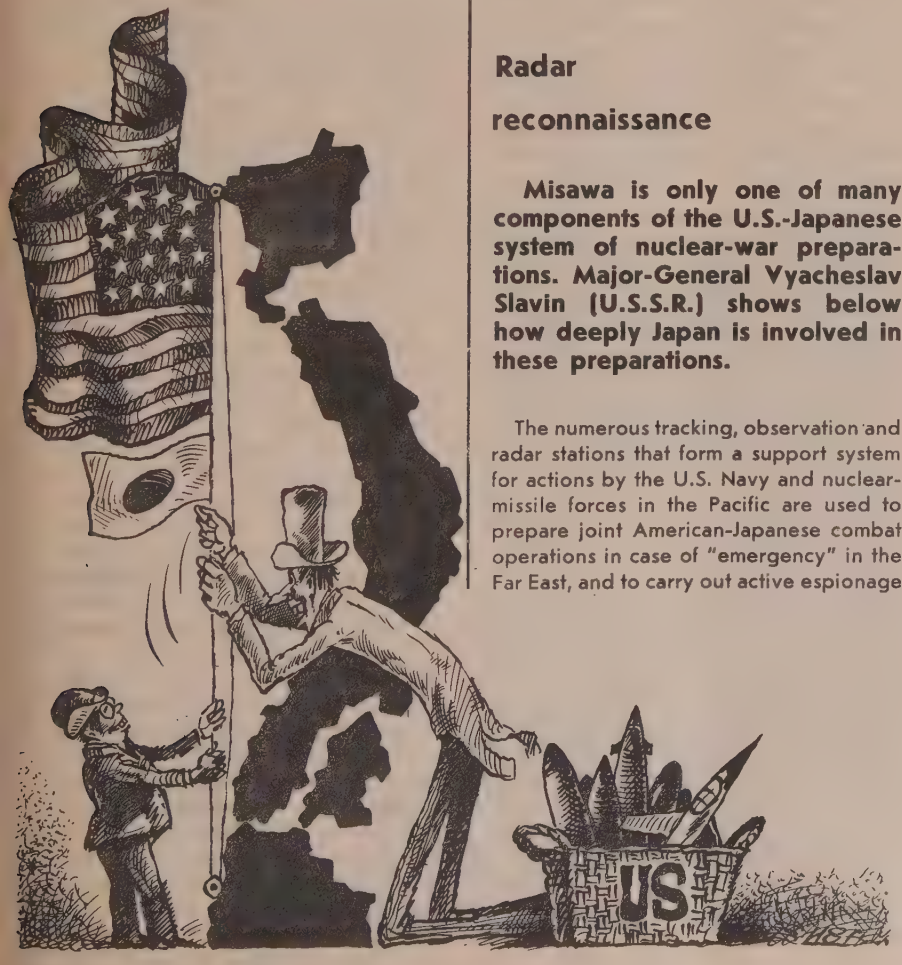
Our correspondent Vladimir Ovsyannikov reports from the town of Misawa, Aomori prefecture, in the north of Honshu.

Here in Misawa, the second largest U.S. airbase in Japan, the stationing of 52 nuclear-capable F-16 fighter-bombers is being completed. Thirty-nine planes have already arrived. Misawa base is the only place in the country where nuclear-weapon carriers are openly located. The Soviet Maritime Region and the Far East are within their range.

Work is in full swing at the base. Behind the barbed-wire fence are huge white spheres resembling space vehicles, and a complex metal structure that can be likened to a vast enclosure for brontosauri. It is an aerial of the global electronic system through which a command authorizing the use of nuclear weapons can be transmitted.

Is there any evidence that nuclear weapons have been delivered to Misawa base?

"Americans stick to their well-known principle: neither to confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons at bases, or on planes or ships," says Ichikawa, leader of a public organization that is campaigning strenuously against its dangerous neighbour. "We, like most of our compatriots, are sure that American nuclear weapons have been brought into Japan. There are nuclear weapons at Misawa base too."



Radar reconnaissance

Misawa is only one of many components of the U.S.-Japanese system of nuclear-war preparations. Major-General Vyacheslav Slavin (U.S.S.R.) shows below how deeply Japan is involved in these preparations.

The numerous tracking, observation and radar stations that form a support system for actions by the U.S. Navy and nuclear-missile forces in the Pacific are used to prepare joint American-Japanese combat operations in case of "emergency" in the Far East, and to carry out active espionage against the Soviet Union, China and other Asian countries in peacetime.

Radar reconnaissance points constitute almost a quarter of the 127 American military bases and installations in Japan. The United States has set up in that country stations monitoring underwater expanses, hydro-acoustic reconnaissance systems at Shimokita and on Iwo Jima and Okinawa islands to provide support for the operations of American submarines. A chain of Loran C stations has been built in the country for the orientation of American nuclear submarines when launching their ballistic missiles.

At its joint meeting in 1982 the American-Japanese advisory committee on security adopted a provocative decision: to start drawing up plans for joint combat operations by the Japanese and U.S. armed forces in case of "emergency" (war - **V.S.**) in the Far East.The plans envisage the blockade of three international straits - La Perouse, Tsugaru and Tsushima - to shut off the Soviet Pacific fleet's access to the ocean. The entire coast of the Japanese islands washed by these straits is now studded with American and Japanese radar reconnaissance stations for the detection and tracking of Soviet vessels.

A large group of Japanese experts went to the United States last month to buy a radar with an effective range of 3,000 kilometres. At the Pentagon's urgent request, it will be located on one of the Ryukyu islands for the constant monitoring of the Soviet bases in the Vladivostok area. In his report to Congress last year Defence Secretary Weinberger noted that long-range surveillance radars were being set up along the possible combat routes of U.S. strategic bombers.

All information about Soviet bases, planes and ships is passed on to the American intelligence centres at Misawa and Kamiseya air bases. The espionage centre at Misawa base controls the North Pacific. The Kamiseya base is situated near Tokyo. According to the newspaper Asahi, an agency for the coordination of joint operations in the South Pacific has been set up there.

In short, the U.S. strategy in the Pacific is today impossible without Japan's active help.

By his suggestion with regard to Alaska, Premier Nakasone played into President Reagan's hands, but cancelled the oft-proclaimed readiness of his own government to work for a total ban on weapons of mass annihialtion. He will have to give an explanation in parliament, as the opposition intends to make the government's position on nuclear weapons a central issue at a special session.

THE N-2 BLOCK MYSTERY

How the FBI operates

On December 13 Bobby Garcia was found dead in his solitary confinement cell in the N-2 Unit of the Terre Haute prison in Indiana, U.S.A. The official report released by the prison authorities said that Garcia had died of "self-inflicted fractures of the neck and secondary strangulation, caused by hanging himself from the neck on a twisted sheet from the low bars of his cell window."

The pathological-anatomical jargon does not, however, explain how it was possible for suicide to be committed in the unit, where prisoners are observed round--the-clock by a closed-circuit TV surveillance system. Moreover, wardens do a cell-by- cell roll call every hour. And no sheets are issued to inmates, as being unnecessary on death row. The N-2 Unit is notorious as a "behavior modification" unit in which prisoners suffer agony, which at times lasts for many long years.

Wardens learned of Bobby Garcia's death - or at least reported it - at 6 a.m. That in itself is significant as that is breakfast time in the unit, with all the attendant fuss and bustle. The shuffling of feet down the corridors, the clanging of dishes, the raised voices of the wardens, and the squeaking of windows in cell doors through which food is pushed - all these sounds would inevitably have served to muffle any noise from Bobby's cell.

But one prisoner, returning from a duty spell in the prison hospital, heard something. First he noticed several wardens entering Bobby's cell. Then he heard a noise ("as if people were scuffling") and then suddenly there was quiet.

This undesirable witness, incidentally, was immediately removed from the Terre Haute Prison after Bobby's death, and for good measure all the other prisoners from the N-2 Unit were evacuated and sent to various other prison institutions.

However, there was no hiding the results of the statutory autopsy. It revealed eight different drugs in Garcia's system, mostly barbiturates, two of which were mutually "contra-indicated," that is not to be prescribed at the same time. Attorney Jim Roberts, who undertook an independent investigation, declared that the suicide version fails to stand up to any more or less objective analysis. Much the same view is held by Garcia's friends, who believe he was strangled after having been rendered unconscious by barbiturates. And then, to cover the tracks, he was hanged. For what? For having saved Peltier.

A tomb for the living

The Movement of American Indians is an organization fighting for the restoration of the rights of the indigenous population of America. The FBI proclaimed it a terrorist organization spurred on by the Reds, and began to hunt down its leaders, hoping, first and foremost, to neutralize Leonard Peltier.

One trap laid by the FBI worked. In June 1975, two FBI agents provoked an exchange of fire near the Indian village of Oglala in the Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota. Probably they hoped to shoot Leonard and then claim "self-defence." What the agents did not expect was that the entire local population would take up arms, and that they would be the victims of their own provocation. Nor can it be ruled out that they had deliberately been made fall-guys.

Be that as may, the death of the two agents (even if it had not been planned by the authors of Operation Peltier), played into the hands of the FBI. Having fabricated false testimony by witnesses and falsified the results of ballistic tests, the FBI staged a trial in 1977. Leonard Peltier was found guilty of double murder and sentenced to two life sentences.

As soon as the sentence was passed, Peltier was moved to the high security prison in Marion, which is stuffed with all kind of electronic devices. It is used either for hopeless criminals, or **political prisoners.**

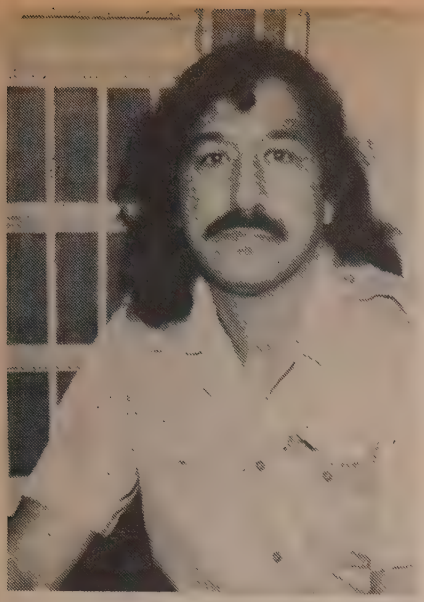
Its isolation cell is notorious. Actually, it is a prison within a prison, which the authorities describe as a behavior modification unit and the convicts call the worst hole in the country. And not just because beatings of handcuffed prisoners are commonplace. Prisoners are kept in metal boxes of 1.8 x 2.4 metres with steel-stab beds. In addition to the cages there are also containers - concrete bags in which the prisoners sit in absolute darkness. It is at the Marion prison that captive humans are subjected to character invalidation experiments devised by a certain Dr Edgar Schein.

In Peltier's case, the FBI decided not to rely solely on Dr Schein's "scientific methods," especially as Leonard Peltier's speech in court left no doubt that his will could not be broken by cages or containers. A friend and colleague of Leonard Peltier, Herb Powless, said: "The U.S. government and its law-enforcement agencies would like to see Peltier dead; not because he is guilty of anything, but because he is a symbol of the free spirit of our Indian people."

And so a new plan for "neutralizing" Peltier was produced. From Marion he was unexpectedly moved to Lompoc, an ordinary prison.

Recruitment

On March 17, 1978, prison doctor Dr J.R. Plank proposed to his patient Bob Wilson, who suffered from terrible pains in the spine, that he report to the authorities on Peltier's behaviour. Wilson, a criminal with terrible record, who had already served 25 years and was awaiting trial for another 7 crimes, refused - because of his hatred for the police. As a result, completely helpless, he was placed in a single cell and for six weeks deprived of his invalid chair, medicine and all medical aid. On May 5, he collapsed and was unable to get up. On May 10, in desperation and in fear of death, he agreed to cooperate with the FBI.



Leonard Peltier: Bobby Garcia and Dallas Thundershield gave their lives for him.

On May 17 he was visited by a representative of the prison authorities accompanied by a stranger who promised Bob that all cases against him would be dropped and he would be released before his time was up in exchange for the "neutralization" of Peltier. The stranger had the confident manner of one with the authority to keep his promises. "If anything happens to Peltier and an inmate is acting in self-defence, no court would give the inmate a life sentence," he tried to persuade Wilson.

The FBI agents were relying on information they had acquired from the thick file on the dyed-in-the-wool criminal. But they missed one fact from his biography, which should have warned them. Wilson looked like anyone else, but he was an Indian by birth who had been given the name of Standing Deer.

In a letter from prison he wrote about Leonard: "I saw in him everything I could never be. He was loved by his people and he was dedicated to them. I saw my life as a lie and I knew that I was being offered a chance to redeem myself with my people by giving them the gift of this man's life. I knew I would die if I betrayed the united states (Wilson showed his contempt for the authorities by refusing to use capital letters - **A.O.**), but I knew I wouldn't want to live if I didn't. So I told him!"

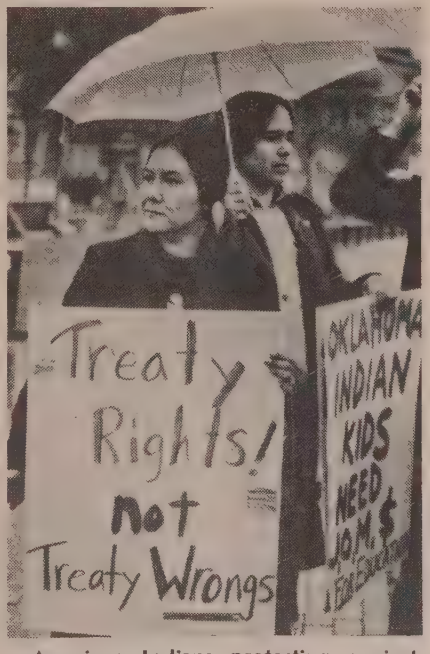
Friends outside sounded the alarm: they knew it was practically impossible to prevent an attempt on Peltier's life prepared with the knowledge and connivance of the authorities. Peltier decided to follow insistent advice and try to escape, and to this end he turned for help to fellow-prisoner Bobby Garcia, who had been recommended as a past master of escape.

Bobby Garcia, unsociable, suspicious, who had lived through a bitter personal tragedy and lost all trust in people, who after long years in solitary confinement had forgotten how to mix with other people, and who always, as he himself said, found it hard to establish personal contact, trusted Peltier from the outset. "He was teaching me about the Indian religion, my Indian heritage, things that I didn't know, that I should be proud of, and I came to like the man."

Draw fire on oneself

Late in the evening of July 20, 1979, Peltier and Garcia made their way through the attic to the roof of J Unit. At the last moment they were joined by another prisoner - 20-year-old Indian Dallas Thundershield, who had made friends with Leonard while in prison. They jumped to the ground and ran towards the wire fence. The sentry on the tower could clearly see the men in the beams from the searchlight and shouted several times to them to stop. But he was in no hurry to fire a warning shot. The reason for this hesitation, so unusual for American guardians of public order, who follow the axiom "fire first, ask questions afterwards," the fleeing prisoners only understood after they had made their way through the barbed wire and run for cover among the trees.

They were caught in the blinding headlights of a car, and a mocking, lazy voice ordered them to come out with their hands up. An ambush! They had apparently been betrayed by one of the numerous informers the FBI recruits among hardened criminals. Presumably, the guards had been instructed to let them through the wire fence in order to provide a pretext and justification for the deliberate killing of Leonard on the spot.



American Indians protesting against cuts in allocations for the development of Indian reservations.

Photos by TASS and from National Geographic (U.S.A.)

Dallas Thundershield without hesitation walked out from behind the trees straight into the spotlight - round and bright like the sun, so revered by all Indians as the symbol of good and truth. And he fell onto the dusty road, brought down by a bullet from a .38 revolver. That was how he was remembered by Peltier and Garcia, whom he had allowed to win time....

The man who shot Dallas was William Guild, an engineer from the prison's power station. He shoved revolver No. 445497, belonging to the prison guard, into his pocket and clamped handcuffs on the young man in his death agony. (Guild as an engineer had no right to carry arms or any reason to have handcuffs in his pocket. Later he insisted that the revolver had been thrown right into his hands from the 12-metre-high sentry tower). Guild had never seen Peltier, and all Indians looked alike to him. Having shot a long-haired chap, he decided he had done what he had to.

In the woods Bobby lost sight of Peltier. But from the shouting and roar of engines, and the dancing lights he realized that the hunt was still on. Peltier's chances were being reduced with every passing moment. Choosing his time, Bobby straightened up and shouted at the top of his voice that he surrendered. Seeing that the pursuers had begun running towards him, he thought he had given Peltier a chance to get away.

Later at the trial in Los Angeles in November 1979 he was asked why he had given himself up when he could have counted himself free.

Answer: Well, because I wanted to make sure that Leonard made the escape good....I wanted to make sure that I could draw fire in case it was necessary....

Question: Now, when you say "to draw fire in case it was necessary," what do you mean by that?

Answer: Well, Leonard has a lot to give to the people....And he's a good man....And he gives you a sense of unity, a sense of worth....What more honour can you give a man than that?

Question: Than to be willing to give up your life?

Answer: Yes.

Bobby realized that he could expect no mercy. But he gave his life to save Peltier for all Indians. The escape from Lompoc, the trial in Los Angeles, at which, despite all the attempts of Judge Lawrence Lydick, the FBI plot to kill Peltier was exposed, and later Garcia's own mysterious death became public knowledge.

ALEXANDER OBUKHOV

Boris Pasternak on his novel "Doctor Zhivago"

The free ascent of imagination

Farewell, extending wing,
The free ascent of imagination,
The whole world imaged in the word,
The miracles of creation.
(translated by John Stallworthy and Peter France)

With these four lines from the poem "August," which was written in 1953 and incorporated in the novel "Doctor Zhivago," Boris Pasternak takes leave of the book, which he considered to be the most important work of his life. More than 30 years have passed since he finished the book. All his life he had wanted to write a major prose work, and what he says of the leading character of the novel could well apply to himself.

"Ever since his schooldays Yura had dreamed of writing a book in prose, a book of impressions of life in which he would conceal, light bird sticks of dynamite, the most striking things he had so far seen and thought about. He was too young to write such a book; instead, he wrote poetry. He was like a painter who spent his life making sketches for a big picture he had in mind."

Some prose passages interspersed with his first verses can be found among the notes of Pasternak's student years. In 1915 he wrote his first short story "The Apelles Mark." His work in prose always ran parallel with his writing of poetry.

After finishing the volume of lyrical verse entitled "My Sister, Life" in the winter of 1917-18, he began writing what in an autobiographical essay he described thus: "the rough copy of a novel filling several large exercise books, the edited beginning of which was published in the form of a story entitled 'Jenya Luvers' Childhood.'" Some critics consider this perhaps the best thing Pasternak ever wrote. Not because of the general significance of the piece but because of its literary perfection, a level the young writer was as yet unable to sustain, and this prevented him from realising the conception to the full.

After the publication of "Jenya Luvers' Childhood" Pasternak returned to the unfinished novel. His attempts to finish it failed, on the one hand, because he was short of money and had to concentrate on current literary work to earn his living. On the other hand, the life of the generation to which the characters belonged was constantly changing, without taking the definite shape the artist needed for a realistic depiction of the time.

The range of ideas close to him found expression in the novel in verse "Spectorsky" and "A Tale" of 1929, a piece of prose thematically kindred to it. Both works revealed the author's desire, as he himself wrote, "to return to history a generation that seemed to have been detached from it." "A Tale," too, was the beginning of a long novel on which he worked for ten years.

Pasternak wrote about this in a letter to Maxim Gorky dated March 4, 1933: "For a long time I could not work, Alexei Maximovich, because for me work means writing prose, and I could not make a go of it. Whenever something I had conceived would just begin to take shape, my material circumstances (not necessarily deplorable but always nevertheless real) would oblige me to publish it. That is why all I have are bits and pieces and nothing worthwhile to look back at. For a long time, all these past years, I have dreamed of a piece of prose which, like a lid on a box, would top all the unfinished work and complete all the plots, mine and destiny's.

"And now quite recently, a month or two ago, I sat down to write such a work. I believe in it and am very eager to work at it. For the coming month there will be no need to interrupt it - so far I can continue. But it will take me a long time to write, not in the sense of thinking it out or polishing the style, but as regards the plot itself: it covers a great deal of ground and develops in the process of writing; additions have to be constantly inserted and they constantly revert to the past and cannot be tacked on to the end of what has been written, the story evolves (for me, so far) not consecutively but somehow at criss-cross levels.

"In short, fortunately (for the work) it cannot be published piecemeal until the whole thing has been written, and it will take no less than a year to do so. And another even worse circumstance is that in the process of writing it (and not before) I shall have to travel to the scenes (or, so to say, the areas of life) involved in it. In a word, it is a long, drawn-out affair."

Once again the work had to be interrupted. Pasternak turned to translating Georgian poetry.

The first stage of the book was completed in 1936. A year later he gave Literaturnaya Gazeta a small excerpt headed "From a new novel about the year 1905." Accompanying the text was a note to the editor which read: "I shall write the first part of the novel this year. It will have three parts. I do not know what the title will be. The first part will be about children."

That part related to 1905 when the leading characters of the novel were 14 years old. The editor, Y. Pelson, proposed to publish Pasternak's note in a summary headed "What Soviet authors are writing in 1938?" and asked him for more details. Pasternak did not care for advance announcements. He crossed out the text of his note and wrote: "Please do not publish anything of the kind. This is not a state matter, and I cannot understand the paper's insistence. Just publish the excerpt. Strictly speaking, I do not like talking about what we writers intend to delight the world with, and would kindly ask to be relieved of this compulsion."

Altogether five excerpts were published between 1937 and 1939. The full text of this part of the novel was preserved among the papers of Vsevolod

Boris Pasternak in 1947.

Photo by Stanislav Neigauz (published for the first time).

Vishnevsky, the editor of Znamya magazine, and was published in the Novy Mir in 1980 under the heading given it by the author in 1950 when the text was returned to him - "The beginning of the prose of 1936." It is difficult to say at what stage the work on the novel was in 1941 when the war broke out.

In the first months of the war the small trunk containing Boris Pasternak's manuscripts and paintings by his father, Academician Leonid Pasternak, was taken to the neighbouring country house belonging to Vsevolod Ivanov where an anti-aircraft crew was stationed. When he was evacuated, Pasternak did not risk leaving the manuscripts and paintings behind in his own empty house. In January 1942 the Ivanov house was burned to the ground.

Although in his letters Pasternak often deplored the loss of his father's work, he never mentioned his lost manuscripts. Everything of artistic value in the original concept was firmly preserved in his memory. Besides, his attitude to the characters in the book and to the events in their lives after the war would naturally acquire a new colouring.

Anticipation of victory over fascism possessed everyone beginning with the successful battles of the Kursk Bulge and the subsequent offensive in Byelorussia. Returning from a trip to the front in October 1943, Pasternak wrote:

"The course of events and the logic of our glorious victgory have inspired us all for some time now. From day to day its all-encompassing grandeur and power become ever more manifest.... It is a victory of the entire people, its every section, with its joys and sorrows, its dreams and thoughts....

"It is a victory for all, and in these very days a new and higher era in our historical existence is opening before our eyes.

"Nationwide team spirit is beginning to pervade all spheres of activity. That spirit is making itself felt in our own modest endeavours too."

"Doctor Zhivago," which Pasternak began two years later, was to be the artistic embodiment of these historical hopes.

At the end of the war Pasternak did a great deal of translating, counting on ensuring the material wherewithal needed work on the novel. He also wrote articles devoted to the great artists he admired - Verlaine, Chopin, Shelley, Baratashvili and Shakespeare - in which he expressed the thoughts on realism in art that had occurred to him while translating the works of the great masters of the past. He intended to write one such article about Blok as the personification of early 20th-century Russia. As he selected verses for that article from the first volume of the Alkonost edition of Blok and made the relevant notes, Pasternak had a clear vision of the atmosphere of the youth, of his own generation, their hopes and aspirations. He noted the "well-springs of the world outlook and the reserves underlying the whole system of imagery and form" in the work of Blok and the young Mayakovsky, and "the inner constants repeated in all variations and constituting obligatory elements of the content." He felt, however, that it would not be enough to write a historico-literary article about the generation which was to say the next new word after Blok in the Russian spiritual tradition.

The initial outlines of his novel relate to the winter of 1945-46. In the summer of 1946 he began to write regularly. The original title was "Boys and Girls." In the previous outlines the leading character was a professional artist with a background similar to Pasternak's own. Now he decided to release his hero from the confines imposed by the profession. Later he was to describe his leading character and the plot of the novel thus:

"The leading character, Yuri Andreyevich Zhivago, is a physician, a thinking, searching, creative, artistic personality. He dies in 1929, leaving behind him some notes and, among other papers, finished poems written in his youth... which taken together will constitute the concluding chapter of the novel." (Znamya, No. 4, 1957.)

The first part was completed by the winter of 1946-47. In order to ascertain the attitude of the readers to what he had written, he frequently arranged readings of completed chapters in the homes of various friends, to which all who were interested were invited. Among the first to attend these readings were Anna Akhmatova, Konstantin Fedin, Vsevolod Ivanov, Svyatoslav Richter and Maria Yudina. Lydia Chukovskaya took down in shorthand Pasternak's introductory comment at a reading on April 5, 1947. At the first Pasternak Readings on May 30, 1987, she read the transcript to the audience.

"I believe that the theatrical form of the written word is not drama, it is prose. In the sphere of letters I like prose above all, yet I have mostly written poetry. The relation of verse to prose is the same as that of a sketch to a picture. To me poetry is a large literary sketchbook.

"Like Mayakovsky and Yesenin, I began writing at a time of the disintegration of form, a disintegration that has been going on since Blok. For the present talk it is enough to say that in my view prose has been stratified. Bare description, the idea and only the idea remain in prose. Perhaps the best prose today is descriptive. Fedin's descriptive prose is of a very high standard, but a certain creative dream has been lost in prose. I have long wished - and am only now beginning to succeed - to make in my lifetime a sort of spurt, to find a way forward from this condition. I have no idea what my novel will be like objectively, but for me, within the framework of my own life, it is a sharp spurt forward on the plane of thought. On the stylistic plane, it is a desire to create a novel that would be not merely descriptive but that would give dramatic expression to feeling, dialogue and people. This is the prose of my time, of our time, and very much my own.

"This summer I was asked to write something for the Blok anniversary. I wanted very much to write an article about Blok, and it occurred to me that the novel I am working on could substitute for an article about Blok. (Blok himself was drawn to brilliant prose - he produced passages, fragments of it). I have succumbed to powerful impulses emanating from Blok and they carry me forward. I wanted to write prose that would be realistic and symbolic as I understand it, to present it not sketchily, but as drama or tragedy."

Bitter years of extreme ideological and administrative rigidity followed. Difficult though it was for him to work, Pasternak saw in his book an opportunity to say what he thought. Later he expressed his ideas in a letter to Vyacheslav Ivanov thus:

"For a long time, even during the war, I had been sick and tired of the smugly complacent established canons of versifi

cation, literary careerism and adulation of names as a ceaseless accumulation of mistakes and blunders to which one yearned to put a shattering, telling, conclusive end once and for all, and which had to be atoned for; one longed for something that would demolish at one blow the customary yardsticks, as, for instance, suicides in the lives of others or political court judgements, not necessarily tragedy or catastrophe, but something that would definitely cancel out all the accretions of habit and mark the beginning of something new and irreversible, that it should be the intervention of the will in destiny, the intrusion of the soul in what had seemingly done without it and did not concern it. I am not saying that my novel is something outstanding, that it is talented, a success. But it is a turning point, a decision taken, a desire to begin saying all that has to be said and to evaluate life in the spirit of the past absolute values, in its broadest sense. If formerly various iambic metres have preoccupied me, I now began writing at any rate such was my intention - in a **global metre.**"

He worked on the novel with a sense of happiness and joy. The renewed repressions and the parallel wave of the attacks by literary critics (1946-53) did not becloud that feeling of uplift. "Now that the misunderstanding and all the fuss about me is becoming so persistent, I am truly resolved to assert myself as a human being!" he wrote to his cousin Olga Freidenberg following another public criticism levelled against him. Inwardly prepared for the worst, Pasternak felt that if he was doomed to perish then it should be for something worthwhile, and not simply by mistake. "The atmosphere of the thing," he wrote her, "is determined by my Christianity, which in its breadth is somewhat different from that of the Quakers or the Tolstoyans, it stems from other aspects of the Gospel besides the moral.... The novel is so far entitled 'Boys and Girls.' In it I am settling scores with... all forms of nationalism. This is all so important, and the colours fit so neatly into the contours of the concept, that I shall not last a year unless in the course of that year this transformation of mine, which extends almost physically to my inwards and nerve ends, will live and thrive."

Convinced of the need to tie up the ever-loosening ends of the spiritual makeup of a generation that had lost so much in the past decades, Pasternak consciously renounced the aesthetic extremes that had marked his earlier work.

"I am trying," he wrote Varlam Shalamov in reply to the latter's analysis of the novel, "to expound in modern translation, in the more common, customary and restrained language of today, at least some part of that world, at any rate the most precious part (but do not think that this part consists of the biblical theme, that would be a mistake; no, it is the warm, colourful, organic perception of life that has been conveyed through the centuries by that theme.)"

In January 1948 he signed a contract with the Novy Mir magazine and received an advance payment on the novel, then entitled "Innokenty Dudorov." When the agreement was cancelled and the advance payment returned through the courts, there remained no longer any doubt that the novel would not be published in the foreseeable future. The tremendous volume of work involved in the translation of seven Shakespeare tragedies, two parts of Faust, all of Baratashvili and the poems and verses of Petöfi delayed the writing of the novel for years, although the details of the plot and its development had been clear to the author from the outset.

..."The first part of the book was written for the sake of the second, which will cover the period from 1917 to 1945," he explained in letters written in October 1948. "I have a clearer idea of the subject and concept of this second book than I had of the first part when I conceived it. But in order to live (and, after all, this prose is not yet intended for publication), I had to engage in translating and, consequently, I was obliged to interrupt my work on the book. At present I am busy translating Goethe's 'Faust' (Part One) and the work of a Hungarian classical poet, and am in a hurry, hoping to finish the work by Christmas. I am simply bursting with all kinds of ideas and conjectures and am more anxious than ever to get down to work.

"After all, apart from the revolution, we lived at a time of the general disintegration of the basic forms of consciousness; all useful habits and conceptions, all kinds of needed aptitudes were shaken. One becomes conscious so belatedly of what one needs; only now have I mastered what I aspired to all my life - but what can one do but be thankful even for this."

Realization of the inevitability of historical renewal illumines the concluding lines of "Doctor Zhivago":

"Although the enlightenment and liberation which had been expected to come after the war had not come with victory, a presage of freedom was in the air through the postwar years, and it was their only historical meaning.

"To the two aged friends sitting by the window it seemed that this freedom of the spirit was there, that on that very evening this future had become almost tangible in the streets below, and that they had themselves entered that future and would, from now on, be part of it. They felt a peaceful joy for this whole city and for the whole land, for the survivors and all those who had played a part of this story and for their children, and silent music of happiness filled them and enveloped them and sprayed far and wide. And it seemed that the book in their hands knew what they were feeling and gave them its support and confirmation."

EVGENI PASTERNAK

Veterans of film festivals say that never before has there been so much laughter, and heated argument, that never before have informal gatherings gone off so well. The centre of all these activities is the new, professional film-workers' club, which immediately won all hearts. For the period of the festival it occupied the old film workers' premises on Vasilyevskaya Street and started competing with the traditional film festival programme in the Hotel Rossiya, the festival's official headquarters.

...The music is audible in the brightly decorated foyer leading to the White Hall: for a whole week rock groups and jazz bands competed with one another, before giving way to Vladimir Spivakov's and other famous chamber orchestras. But people flocked there not so much for the entertainment, as to get down to work again. Each day was given over to a specific subject: children and films, women in films, the role of films in the efforts to avert nuclear catastrophe. And more films to see.

There was a review of the work of younger directors. Guests had the chance to meet the new generation of film-makers: Alexander Kaidanovsky, Vladimir Tumayev, Temur Babluani. And side by side with the newest works, an old film cropped up: The Commissar, which recreates an episode from the now distant heroic days of the October Revolution. Its success was phenomenal. The film was made in 1967 (!). But thanks to those who then run Goskino it lay gathering dust on the shelves for twenty years. The audience greeted those involved in the film with a storm of applause, producer Alexander Askoldov, and actors Nonna Mordyukova, Raisa Nedashkovskaya and Rolan Bykov. They applauded not only their talent, but also their courage (after all, the film had been suppressed for a record period). It was also a goodbye, we hope forever, to the time when films could be arbitrarily pigeonholed. In other words, the applause was also for the new period we have entered, for justice restored.

The meeting arranged for participants and guests at the Festival with Elem Klimov and the secretariat of the Union of Cinematographists had as its slogan - In the vanguard of perestroika, while that with writers and journalists was devoted to the press as an instrument of glasnost. At both the debate was reasoned, passionate and incisive. The concept of freedom of speech was given its original meaning. While from the Soviet side there were such brilliant speakers as the historian Yuri Afanasyev and the popular TV commentator Vladimir Pozner, the highest rating among the foreign guests went to Vanessa Redgra-

SEEDS OF EVIL AND ROOTS OF GOOD

NEYA ZORKAYA

ve, a member of the famous British acting family (Soviet audiences know her from her films roles - Antonioni's "Blow-up" and Fred Zinnemann's "Julia"). But now she won them over with her gift for passionate and comprehensive. The speakers pointed out that due to technological progress, the development of means of communication, and contiguity of different nations and different

These questions are to some extent answered by the overall panorama of films at the Moscow Festival. Not for nothing does its emblem include a blue globe: the films shown at the "Rossiya" Hotel provide a view of the whole world, and the preoccupations, great and small, of its people. This includes the efforts of the Australian aborigines to save their sacred lands from encroachment by foreign companies, and the bitterness of a Chilean youth forced to live abroad and dreaming of the mountains around his beloved Santiago; the acute, and in many respects tragic fate of a "lost generation" shown in such fundamentally different but impressive films as the Yugoslav entry "October

polemic, her knowledge of the changes taking place in our country and our cultural life, and her profound interest in them.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Vanessa Redgrave and Andrei Voznesensky, and Stanley Kramer at the Moscow film festival.

TASS photo

Awakening mankind

At the round-table discussion on films on the threshold of the 21st century, participants included not just film workers but prominent scientists - scholars Vitaly Goldanski, Nikita Moiseyev, the eye surgeon Svyatoslav Fyodorov and Metropolitan Pitirim. The discussion of such complex global problems as the nuclear threat and preserving the biosphere - in short, the survival of mankind and life on our planet, was

social structures, it is essential to draw up new rules whereby we can live together. Otherwise the spectre of extermination will stand on the threshold of our common home. Does the cinema today correspond to the present stage of civilization? At the beginning of the century when it was still in its infancy the Russian writer Leonid Andreyev wrote that "the cinema is becoming the genie of international communication, uniting together the different parts of the world and the peoples inhabiting them into a single stream of awakening humanity." And now as the century draws to its close and the cinematograph approaches its centenary, how is it fulfilling the mission the prophets envisaged for it?

Holiday", the Norwegian "Hard Asphalt" or the hors-concours film "The Fish-Warrior" by Francis Coppola," the conflict feelings of a young Chinese woman who owns a hairdressing business as to how combine her commercial interests with the austerity she was taught in her childhood ("Zhenzhen's Beauty Parlour," China), and many more - a mosaic of people and biographies, landscapes and scenes, conflicts, dreams, visions, memories, reality and fantasy, mass action, and the individual fates of alienated people. The festival featured all these themes, and it is therefore possible to single out certain common strands.

Well done, but...

First some of the disappointments. There are few really outstanding produc-

tions. Both the numerous hors concours films, and those that had won prizes at previous prestigious festivals like the winners of the Prix d'Or at Cannes-86 and 87, the British film "Mission" and Maurice Pialat's "Under Satan's Sun," as well as a number of other films that have featured in the Western press, were, I feel, well-made, worthwhile and honest films, but they did not belong to the category that makes history. But it is, of course, true that epics aren't made especially for festivals, so we shall patiently await their appearance in the future....

Attention should be drawn to two diametrically opposed problems that beset a number of films. On the one hand, and this applies to films from the highly-developed, prosperous countries, there is the subjectivist preoccupation with intimate feelings, and today with bodies as well, and most important with the subconscious. As if all political, social, moral and spiritual problems had been resolved and all that remains is individual self-expression, and especially, sexual freedom. This flogging a dead horse in the wake of the long-won sexual revolution, this Pyrrhic victory on the screen, is to be regretted. Homosexuals who succesfully find partners, Lesbians whose kiss can, it is claimed, awaken creative potential in women, the high priestesses of Love demonstrating their professional skills, incest, obsessions and the rest - it all continues to dominate the screen. If only the Viennese doctor Sigmund Freud could have known! He wanted to help people and cure them of passions of which they were ashamed, but his psychoanalysis, a working medical procedure, has become so widespread that what was once confined to the practitioner's couch is now common knowledge and presented as almost the norm.

In a similar vein there is the endless introduction, almost de rigueur, of the intimacies of married couples, lovers and casual sexual partners in every film. This is both boring and in bad taste, and fatigues people who are far from being moralizers. One young man at the "Horizont" cinema said thoughtfully after a show that he had had fill of sex on the screen, and now suddenly felt the need to see Sergei Gerasimov's old film "The Journalist," utterly devoid of that stuff. That's how some people react!

At the other end of the scale (mostly in films from the developing countries) what can be described as petty individualist social themes predominate: a fight with a greedy landowner to have excessive rent reduced; the sufferings of a poor girl who wants to be well dressed and to this end becomes her aging employer's mistress; heated debates about the building or, conversely, the demolition of something in a city block. All this is of course life, everyday life. But, unfortunately, no general view of the social realities is presented. We are merely given the old melodrama of an evil man and on innocent victim slightly modernized and socialised.

Investigative films

And yet there were many really profound films! In them the concern that rings out at forums, the concern shown by our outstanding contemporaries, is audible. It is in these films that directors seek, using the means available to them, to reveal the causes of the social and moral ills, and find their roots, which perhaps go back to times long past.

Among the more serious entries I should like to single out the investigative films, analyzing and at times even micro-analyzing a single cell of society - its present, its recent past and its history.

It is not, I feel, for nothing that a number of these analytical films look back on the post-World War Two period - the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s. It is in that world that has just survived a cataclysm, but not yet found its feet, a world full of hope and loss, and giving new shoots, that the film-makers look for the seeds of the cold war, or in the wider sense, of hatred, enmity, xenophobia, complacency and the dangerous superiority complex. One thinks of Desert Flower by Eugene Corr, almost swamped in the multitude of U.S. hors-concours films. Only one of many films shown.

But if we pause and take notice, we shall see how truly it recreates December 1950: the war in Korea as the backdrop, the construction of the "marvels" of Las Vegas and preparations for an atomic explosion. That is the context in which the young heroine of the film lives - an ordinary schoolgirl, though perhaps more perceptive and intelligent than most. It is her story, simply told, but in it you feel the seeds of the present evil. The terrifying hatred for the unknown Russians, for the Soviets (as felt by the girl's stepfather, an invalid and drunkard, shown not as an evil man, but rather as a victim of the war and propaganda). And the complacent way of life, the quick-buck syndrome that provides fertile soil in which colourful artificial flowers can thrive - the easily bought stars of Las Vegas and the mushroom of the atomic explosion in the desert. They form the background for the girl's flight from her home. The film lays no claim to having made a discovery, but it provides a serious and authentic picture of a way of life.

Another film - also an American hors concours contribution - "The Colour of Skin" (directed by S.Man). It begins like an eccentric comedy: a young man who wants to win a scholarship to Harvard that has been earmarked for a black student of law, blackens his skin and gets the place. And so he learns what racism really means. Of course this somewhat theatrical account bears no comparison with the powerful film "Ragtime" by Milos Forman, which also deals with racial inequality but against a different background. But "The Colour of Skin" has its own style and speaks its own message.

Why have people become harder and wilder? Microbes, plasma, the seeds of evil: where do they lie, where do they come from, why? These are the questions that bedevil many of the protagonists of the films. Including churchmen in their confessionals, and in the silence of their retreats. Including, Padre Julio in "The Mass Is Over" by Nanni Moretti, in which the gifted Italian director and actor plays the main part. And the village cure in Maurice Pialat's film "Under Satan's Sun," played by popular actor Gerard Depardieu (he also stars in several other festival films). But both the secular Moretti, who seems more of an intellectual, and Depardieu, who works a miracle, both come to recognize their utter helplessness in the world under Satan's sun.

But while both these imaginary characters sit and reflect, a real-life woman of 77, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Nobel prize-winner and the main character of a documentary made by two young Americans, Jeanette and Ann Petrie, goes out into the world to nurse, help and care for the dying - wherever her help is needed without making any distinction on grounds of race, nationality, religion, political view or system. The storm of applause in the Blue Hall of the Rossiya after the showing of the film confirmed that what our common home, the Earth, needs today is Good in action. ■

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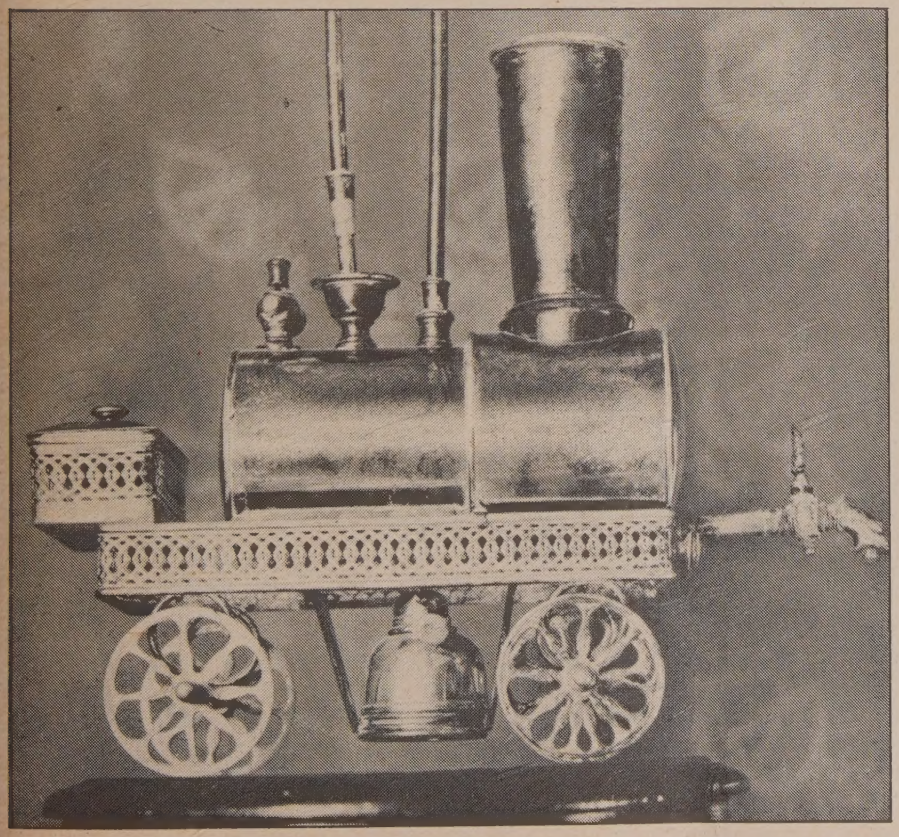
SAMOVARS

In old Russia tea was a very special occasion at which people gathered around the samovar, a symbol of hospitality. Russians could not dispense with it at home or on travel. No wonder there were so many different kinds of samovars: some were huge, some small, boiling water only enough for one cup; some were for official ceremonies, others were for travel. Considerable ingenuity was shown in decorating them.

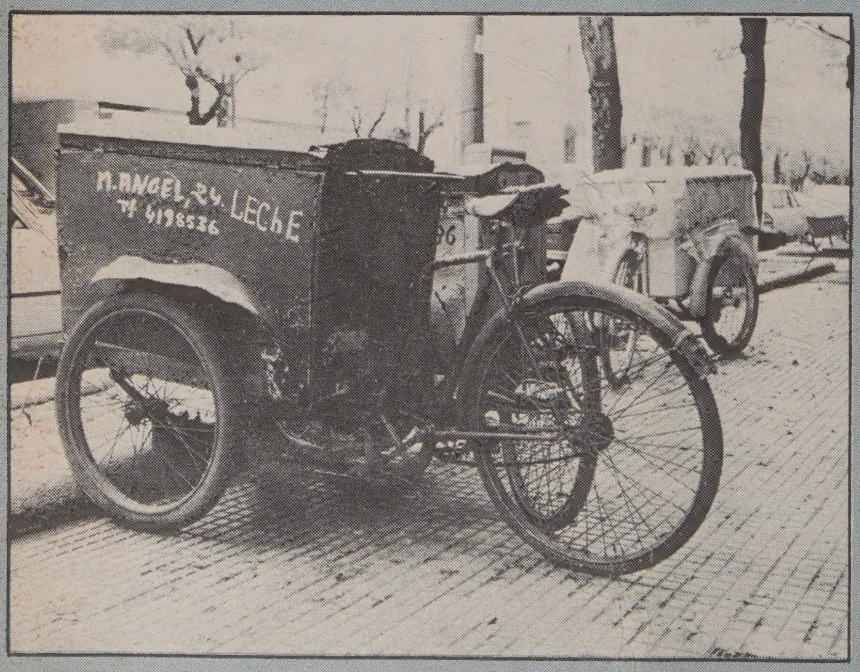
In old Russia Tula, which in 1850 boasted 28 factories producing as many as 120,000 samovars annually, was regarded as the "samovar capital" of the country. Small wonder a whole exhibition of samovars is planed for a branch of the city museum of local lore that is to open soon.

At these factories samovars were contrived in the form of vases, kitchen ranges, even steam engines. Some were shaped as barrels or cylinders, others as spheres. Sometimes they came plain, unadorned, sometimes with lace-like metal ruffs, whether in the Italian Renaissance manner or the original Russian style.



Homeward.

On strike.



INTERNATIONAL CONTEST

MAN AND MANKIND

Alfredo Fernandez
(Spain)

ИНДЕКС 70622 НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ